

# AFTER TWENTY YEARS



By GEORGE W. MIDDLETON



Class B.7 431

Book .M 56

Copyright N<sup>o</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.







# AFTER TWENTY YEARS

A Dissertation on the Philosophy  
of Life in Narrative Form



BY  
GEO. W. MIDDLETON, M.D.

PRESS OF THE DESERET NEWS

Salt Lake City, Dec. 10. 1914

BD 431  
M 55

Copyright, 1914,  
BY GEORGE W. MIDDLETON.

JAN 12 1915

*G. W.*  
©CL A 391463  
no 1

ms. 10 Jan. 26 '15.

## PREFACE

THE purpose of this volume is to discuss the philosophy of life in a concrete way, avoiding as I hope the tediousness that must attach to dissertations on honesty and charity and courage and the many virtues and vices of society when presented in the abstract.

An attempt has been made to weave into the warp of narrative my woof of philosophy, with what success I must leave the reader to judge.

The question naturally arises, Are these real characters, and the answer is that in the main they are. I have reserved the right, however, to vary my colors and to modify my pattern according to my own design.

Since my temporary residence has been in many different places, it is not to be presumed that all the subject matter was collected in any one geographical location.

The objection will be raised that it is a patchwork, and I plead guilty to the charge. I hope, however, that the colors have been painted with sufficient

## P R E F A C E

vividness to compensate for the lack of solidarity which must appear.

To my friends I wish to say, Read it critically, and see if you do not discover at least some fragment of yourself in the pattern. Our conception of life is a component thing, reflecting something of every person we have known, and holding out certain ideals which transcend all personality.

If, therefore, the reader has been my friend or my enemy, he will find himself mixed up to a certain greater or less extent in the character colors which I have tried to work into the pattern.

I make my appeal especially to young people, who have the problems of life all unsolved before them, and trust that I may shed some light upon those shaded sections of the pathway of life where we grope in the darkness and apprehend blindly.

I have attempted to make my climax come in the dissertation on religion and philosophy, in which I have tried to steer clear of all tradition and of conventional forms, and to look at the momentous problems involved purely from the rational viewpoint.

I do not mean by this that there is nothing in tradition, but that I chose to put forth an entirely different line of argument for the proof of Deity and the hope of immortality.

## P R E F A C E

If there is anything which I have said unwittingly, which might be offensive to any of my readers, I beg them to read the text again and see if it is not the other fellow aimed at. We often take things to ourselves which were never intended for us at all. In advance I humbly crave the pardon of anybody who might find occasion for offense, because nothing is meant to cast any reflection on any living person.

I commend myself to the charity of my readers, trusting that they will pardon my weak points and find some satisfaction in the viewpoint of life which has come to me after much thought and reflection.

I am indebted very much to my esteemed friend Prof. John Henry Evans for suggestions as to arrangement of materials, and for many corrections of syntax and form which he has made. The editing has been entirely under his direction.

To my many friends: I thank you all for the contributions you have unwittingly made in conversation and in the display of all those little nameless courtesies of life which are hereby acknowledged with due appreciation.

G. W. M.



## CONTENTS

I.	<i>The Petals of the Daisy</i> .....	1
II.	<i>The Village Butterfly</i> .....	12
III.	<i>The Man Who Never Had a Chance</i> ..	21
IV.	<i>The Easiest Way</i> .....	33
V.	<i>Rags on the Family Tree</i> .....	50
VI.	<i>The Greater Satisfaction</i> .....	79
VII.	<i>A Stone which the Builders Rejected</i>	109
VIII.	<i>The Winner of Real Victories</i> .....	133
IX.	<i>Satellites and Luminaries</i> .....	173
X.	<i>The Years that bring Wisdom</i> .....	200
XI.	<i>On the Anvil of Thought</i> .....	239
XII.	<i>Retrospective</i> .....	286





# AFTER TWENTY YEARS

---

## CHAPTER I

### THE PETALS OF THE DAISY.

I AM in the mood of memories today. The great record of the past has opened its pages before me. Recollection is throwing its pictures upon the mental screen, and bringing out some with a clearness that transcends all the rest.

It is a strange thing how the incidents of life fix themselves in our memory as permanent assets or deficits. Some things that seemed to loom so big that they occupied our whole attention and were for the time being the only things in the world are now blotted out completely from the page and come back to us from the tradition of others as alien experiences, which we look upon as disinterested spectators and do not recognize as a part, at one time a most important part, of our own biography.

Then there are other things so trivial, so devoid

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of interest or value to us now that we would gladly discard them as rubbish, but they cling to us and will not be cast out.

The casket of memory has a wonderful and varied stock of fragments of things—of stories half told, of comedies, of tragedies, of pages gilded with romance and painted with the colors of the morning, of sheets blotted and marred by crime, and black and grimy with the record of life's mistakes, and life's mischances. It has fragments of shafts of envy that were hurled at our unoffending heads. It has tokens of love and respect that brought gladness and faith into our life, and gave us courage to fight on, and to keep up the struggle. It has pictures of faces that have faded out of our life in the long distant past. It has trinkets and locks of hair that hark back to the land of the departed.

And how well its contents are preserved from the ravages of time! The flowers which came to me as the messenger of a friend's esteem were beautiful to behold as they reflected the colors of the rainbow from their gorgeous petals and filled the air with their scented breath. Ephemeral delights! In a few brief hours they were all withered and their message of sentiment completely blotted out. But in the casket of memory they are imperishable. They

## THE PETALS OF THE DAISY

shine with all the lustre of their pristine days, and glisten with the morning dew as when they first unfolded their mysterious forms, and opened their gaudy faces to greet the awakening sun.

As the memory pictures are thrown one by one upon the screen, I select from among the number, perhaps the most vivid, at any rate the most interesting in its far-reaching outgrowth of the score and more of years that have touched its component parts as with a magician's wand and transformed some of them into gold dust and some of them into rust, and some of them into black spots that mar and deface the screen.

It is the picture of a group of happy children playing in a meadow in a summer morning long, long ago. The sun is pouring its golden glory over the eastern hills, and the birds are filling the air with liquid melody. Dew drops are hanging like polished diamonds from every green leaf and from every gorgeous petal.

How like a scene from the land of fairies was this glorious morning landscape, as the children gamboled and played!

Once only in life can we shake off the dross of the world, and feel the true relationship between heaven and earth! But when the gates that have

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

been left ajar are closed behind us, and we go out of the land of the spirit into the domain of material things, the dream of heaven is left behind. Sometimes its echoes reverberate from the land of slumber, and break in upon our night visions and sometimes in day dreams the message comes again. But it is capricious, and its beautiful melody is drowned in the discordant noises of the world. When we have known the satiety of the temporal life and perceived the gossamer texture of the mundane web, what would we not give for a look through the pearly gates which were open to us when our young life still lingered on the threshold? But we must be content to walk by faith and not by actual knowledge, until the veil shall have been raised again and the haze lifted that has rested all these years over our comprehension.

This happy group of children are playing the old game of fortune with the wild daisies from the meadow. They are plucking the petals one by one, and repeating the old familiar rhyme, "A rich man, a poor man, a beggar man, a thief," etc., with the idea that the name corresponding to the last petal should indicate the station in life that Fate has in store for them.

How natural it was in those unreasoning days to

## THE PETALS OF THE DAISY

connect things as cause and effect that have no bearing upon one another! Because this tangible thing that has a material basis is true, this other intangible thing of the mental or spiritual basis must be true also, even though there is nothing in the circumstance or the constitution of things to correlate them. Even the mature mind does not wholly divest itself of this fallacious method of reasoning. It is the old proposition of proving that three is greater than ten by turning a stick into a serpent.

When we look over the record of that great struggle of humanity for knowledge of Deity and destiny which began with the dawn of consciousness, we are amazed to find how very much of the time and energy of the world have been expended to establish the correlation of sequence in events and things which in their nature are entirely distinct and separate.

The eagerness of the child for knowledge of the future—for some token from the land of possibilities, for some foretaste of the satisfaction of conquest or dominion,—is but the same thing as the eagerness of the adult mind, perceiving the evanescence of worldly things, for some foretaste of the more enduring things of his spiritual inheritance. And as the child consults the necromancer, the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

phrenologist, the Gypsy fortune-teller, and even the daisy's petals for an answer to his eager question, "What is my lot to be?" so the adult mind all through the world's history has been wont to consult the spiritual necromancer, and to accept as gospel truth the evasive answer which too often has taken advantage of his childish credulity.

It is a lie, a falsehood! The story of the daisy's petals is not true, as the future pages of this little book are to show.

The eternal chancellors of God are Cause and Effect. These only are the factors that are to determine our destiny. You may ask the sphinx of the future by way of his high priest the necromancer to reveal to you the unwritten chapters of your life, and the only true answer that you will get back is the answer that shall come of your own life's effort. When God gave you your free agency and entrusted you with the responsibility of your own destiny, He did not intend to prop you up at every turn by Providential intervention, to correct your errors and commend you at once for your virtues. Freedom of will was given you that you might develop character. No man ever grows in power only as he develops initiative. God gives you the opportunity, but he will not thrust advantage upon you.

## THE PETALS OF THE DAISY

So when men and women are seeking to bolster themselves up by some extraneous force which is not a part of their own constitution, they are trying to shirk the responsibility that God has placed upon them.

One of the most interesting studies in the world is to watch the careers of those who have been the friends of our childhood, to see how they acquitted themselves when they got out of the play world and were confronted with the really serious problems of life. How interesting and profitable to turn the kaleidoscope of time round by decades to see the new arrangement that has come! If we could have but looked into the future when we stood at the threshold of life where everything was tinted with rainbow colors, and every boy and girl seemed to have their future fixed by the circumstances in which we found them, what a paradoxical thing the next score of years would have presented to us! In our childish imagination we gave first rank to the dandy who dressed well and danced well and walked with a swagger. How many dandies we have seen go the way of the world and seek their level at the lowest stratum of the social scale, and how many uncouth boys from the country farm have we seen work their way to the very first rank of society and stand



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

pre-eminent as professional men, as financiers, as educators!

It was our inexperience that illuded us. If we could have been endowed with our present knowledge of life, we could have put a proper value upon them. From the arc that appeared we could have caluculated the whole circle. For the underlying principles of success or failure are as precise, and the deductions that can be drawn from them as accurate, as the principles of geometry.

As we look back over the vista of the years, the first startling fact that confronts us is the number of our friends who have been gathered in by the grim reaper. As children we watched the sparks of burning soot on the back of the chimney and imagined they were contending armies in deadly conflict. Each instant, in the twinkling of an eye, a soldier went to his doom, and the ranks were filled by others eager for the fight. The iron hand of Fate has dealt just so with our friends.

The inventory of our friends of twenty years ago presents some wonderful transformations. Some have lived a life of resistance and placed themselves counter to the world and the people of the world, and when fortune knocked at their door they have sternly refused to admit her. Some have adapted



## THE PETALS OF THE DAISY

themselves readily into the circumstances in which they found themselves, and prospered in the things of the world and flourished in friendship. It is a great relief to meet one such, who has faith in himself and believes in the eternal fitness of things. Some have drifted from their spiritual moorings and foundered on the rocks of modern speculation. Of the controversy in their minds which ended in the shipwreck of their faith, there is more to be said in the pages of this book. Some have acquitted themselves as men and women of character and taken definite stands on every issue that confronted them. Some have moved along the lines of least resistance and responded to one single impelling motive, their unrestrained desire. Like rudderless ships they have been subject to the caprice of all the winds, with no chart nor compass to guide them. Some have grown thin and nervous; some have grown fat and contented.

I am standing at the end of twenty years that have swept over the group of boys and girls who were my schoolmates and playmates. The years have flown so swiftly by that one gasps to think of the changes they have wrought. When I see how the etching process of the years has marked deep furrows in the forehead of my friends, and sifted the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

frosts of early autumn among the golden tresses, I become aware of the fact that I am subjected to the same process, and must change as they are changing, and as all the world is changing around us. For life and the world and the universe are all unstable things, transforming themselves each year, each decade, each century into new unprecedented forms, developing, evolving, receding. We know that we are in a great process that must have some beneficent ending, we know there must be some goal toward which all things are converging; but we are like the mote upon the sunbeam, we can see neither the source nor the terminus of the light that illuminates us. For God has seen fit to safeguard His secrets by covering them up with mysteries unfathomable. We must content ourselves for the time being with the knowledge that life is, and trust the explanation of it to that future time which we see by the eye of faith, when the mists shall have rolled away, and the great plan that correlates life and death and the world and the universe shall stand revealed. We must act on the presumption that there is such a plan, for any other hypothesis would be inconsistent with reason.

And now to my task of following the life story of the group of happy children we saw playing upon

## THE PETALS OF THE DAISY

the meadow. I shall call the roll only as I wish each one to appear on the stage of action. I shall avoid the dialogue form of narrative because it has been so universally used that I imagine a rest from it may meet the approval of my readers.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VILLAGE BUTTERFLY

I SELECT at random a little girl whom for convenience we shall call Harriet. She is one of nature's favorites. She has golden locks and blue eyes and a smile that captivates every one who comes within the range of its irresistible charm. She was much patronized and petted. It seemed to her that she was born with the queenly prerogative and that all people were born to be her obedient subjects. She measured the world by her little sphere of action, and she did not comprehend that with all her charms she was only an untutored child of the village and that her glory would vanish in an instant if she were dislodged from her primitive setting.

How kind it is of Mother Nature to surround our blissful self-satisfaction with a Chinese wall of ignorance to prevent us from learning the insignificant role the best of us are to play in the great drama of life!

Our little Harriet grew with the ebb and flow of

## THE VILLAGE BUTTERFLY

the seasons, and began to feel the emotions and dream the dreams of budding womanhood. The peach bloom of her native heath had incorporated its gorgeous coloring into the pigment of her cheeks, and the sunbeams had entangled themselves among her golden tresses. Grace of motion and music of voice came with the womanly development. Nature poured out her bounties unstinted over the head of this untutored child and made her the pride of the village, the coveted object of many a masculine desire.

There is a deep, a profound meaning in this language of nature interpreted in fine femininity, be it the endowment of the peasant or of the princess. When the hour of its glory has come, the rose opens its gorgeous face to the morning sun, and freights the breeze with its scented breath. It invokes the occult chemistry of nature to extract from the dull clod of earth ambrosial nectars for the bee and fragrance for the passing stranger. It borrows the most gorgeous colors to adorn itself. It looks with derision at the artist and the sculptor in their vain attempts to imitate its perfect contour, as it sways with the breezes of the spring time.

And all this because it has a message to deliver,

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

a divine function to fulfill. It must purchase the aid of the insect to send its love message to its kindred rose upon another stem. It must put the supreme effort of its life into this love story, that others of its kind may live, that its name and generation may be perpetuated, and that its delight may not vanish from the earth, but that it may augment as the generations come and go.

And this is the language of nature to you, my maiden friend. This is the meaning of the peach blossom upon your cheek, of the golden glory that adorns your head. This is the divine motion that is stirring within you. It is your privilege, it is your prerogative, it is your bounden duty to claim your birthright, to borrow the colors of the autumn forest to adorn yourself, to invoke the Muses for their aid, to appropriate all that art has got to embellish nature, that your love message may be directed to one worthy to receive it, that the greatest of all your contributions to the world may not be of an inferior kind, that your generation may be a unit in an ascending scale of intellect and soul, that the social and intellectual arc which you have subtended may be widened and expanded by those who are to follow you.

And now we find our charming little Harriet

## THE VILLAGE BUTTERFLY

standing at the threshold of womanhood, with all the emotions and instincts of that wondrous epoch vibrating within her. Little does she know the meaning of that hidden language of nature, which speaks in eloquent words from the rosy cheek, from the graceful contour of her form. What wonder if she is sometimes proud and disdainful! The homage of the country swain seems naturally to her, in her meagre experience, to be an indicator of the estimate the world has put upon her. She seems to reign as a queen with all her willing subjects at her feet ready to do homage.

The most autocratic, aristocratic person on the face of the earth is the belle of a country town, as the young man who has experienced her disdain can well attest. But we can pardon that vanity when we get the perspective of the years, and the larger outlook on life that comes with our widening circle of acquaintance. We can see now, as she also can see, how the glory of the country belle would vanish in a moment if she were transplanted from her rural setting into the polished life and be estimated by the fine social requirements of her sisters of the city.

Make the most then of your hour of glory, my little disdainful friend. You are like a butterfly upon the wing, but one day the gorgeous many-colored wings

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

you are disporting will be withered and useless, and you will come down to the level of other mortals, perhaps to crawl as a dull grub, with nothing but the memory of your superlative hour to console you! We will pardon your pride, and think charitably of your disdain. Perhaps you did better than any other mortal would have done under the same circumstances.

The suitors of our little Harriet are all the swains of the village, and she is permitted to take her choice, for any one of them would count himself most lucky to receive the least indication that his advances were approved. Which shall it be? God help her to decide that question, which has held in its answer the happiness or the misery of so many untold thousands of souls. It is ordinarily a game of blind man's buff, in which we grope in the dark and apprehend without seeing. It is a lottery in which are many blanks and only a few real prizes.

Which of all these young men are to be winners in the game of life, and which are destined to recede and go down to ignominious defeat? The pages of this little book, I hope, will be an aid to all those who are hanging uncertain on this momentous problem. That old scripture which says the last shall



## THE VILLAGE BUTTERFLY

be first and the first shall be last is wonderfully true of life. But how is the girl emerging from her 'teens to analyze the method of life of each individual suitor and choose the winner from among the group?

This matter of the choice of a life's companion is one that is looked upon with altogether too much levity. The preliminary negotiations which lead up to this most serious step in life are regarded too often as a joke. When a young man begins to call on a young lady he thus furnishes for his friends and for her friends a capital occasion for jesting. The social circle to which they belong look upon it with lightness, and lose no occasion to make them the subject of such witticisms as they can invent.

But to the young people themselves, who stand breathless on the threshold of this new phase of life, it is the one great event, which overshadows all the other affairs of their life. If we buy merchandise and discover that we have made a mistake, we can in time repair our fortune; and often the experience gained is a more valuable asset in our life than the commodity would have been. But woe be to the man or the woman who makes a bad bargain in the matrimonial market. It were better that a millstone were tied around their neck and that they

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

were cast into the sea. Every day we see matrimonial barks foundering on the shoals of circumstance, because the partners to the venture were not properly matched. If we had some means of testing the condition affinity as we test the electric potential of certain objects with the galvanometer, our mating for life would be a more simple problem. In this matter we are ruled too much by emotion and not enough by reason. The one objection to young marriages is that the choice is made before judgment has developed sufficiently to weigh the consequences.

It is only fair to say on the other hand that the plasticity of youth may enable people to mold their temperament into harmony, and whether by intuition or by chance or by Providence, young marriages often turn out to be satisfactory.

To young people who aim at education, or training for a profession, marriage should be postponed until the preparatory work is consummated, so that they begin life as producers, and not as dead weights retarding their own progress. How often do we see young people subjecting themselves to all kinds of privations and hardships in their college work, and destroying all the romance and poetry of their early married life in the struggle, when they could have

## THE VILLAGE BUTTERFLY

avoided it by postponing the wedding day until after the college work was completed!

The prevalent modern idea which represents the other extreme of the proposition, that young people should not get married until they can afford to live in high style and indulge themselves in all the luxuries of well-to-do people, I believe to be equally wrong. If they are ready to enter the lists as producers, independent of other people, they can afford to make the struggle together, and the training that results from the self-denial they are obliged to exercise will be a great asset in their lives in the after years.

To each individual the plan of his life is the most serious thing that confronts him. We are largely the sculptors of our own character. We ought at least to try to put as much brains into the serious problems that pertain to our happiness for all time as we would in decisions that have commercial value for their issue. We ought to develop the philosophy of living, and in all our social arrangements be governed by reason and not by passion. And when we approach the problem of the choice of a life's companion we should be sure that we have weighed carefully all the consequences, and acted up to the very best judgment we are capable of.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

And this was the problem before our winsome little Harriet as she stood at the end of her 'teens, and indulged in the gossamer dreams of maidenhood. Without much careful consideration, I fear, she faced the hazard of fate and made her choice, and cast her lot for better or for worse with one whom for convenience we will call Henry, as we review his outlook on life and follow his conclusions to their ultimate consequences.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MAN WHO NEVER HAD A CHANCE

LIKE many other young men of his kind Henry was wont to attach much importance to his personal appearance, and after the crude method of his native town, he dressed the best and danced the best of the boys in his circle. He believed that education is a thing limited by nature to certain types of people, and as he did not belong to that particular class, books could be of no value to him. It was his opinion that each individual in this world is born to a certain station in life, and that if one is educated out of his station he will be discontented and unhappy. He rather prided himself on being ignorant of the lore of books and sometimes boasted about it.

Having no regular profession or trade he was obliged to seek employment at one thing and another, as opportunities presented themselves, and often the earnings of one job were all consumed before he got another.

Any young lady in choosing her life's companion, who thinks that happiness is going to abide in homes of poverty will find herself in general mistaken.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

When the wolf comes in at the door, the angel of love goes out at the chimney. There is much practical sense in the question propounded by the young woman of the lower class of England, when a young man comes wooing, "How many shillings a week does he have?" No young man is a fit subject for the matrimonial market the product of whose toil is not sufficient to keep the wife and the children who are to depend on him from being paupers.

Our poor Henry drifted along from one thing to another. Each year found him more circumscribed than the one before. His life was like a spiral each circle of which diminishes in circumference regularly toward a vanishing point. He became pessimistic, and railed against fate. He blamed everybody but himself for the hard luck which seemed always to be his lot.

Whenever you see a man with a hard luck story, you can always find the explanation of his condition in the method of his life. But these hard luck fellows can never see the fault in themselves. They will blame everything and everybody, but never think of blaming themselves. They think the world is in a conspiracy against them. With covetous eyes they look at the possessions of other people and attribute all kinds of unholy motives and methods to the one

## HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE

who succeeds. They always think they never had a chance in the world; that fate is deliberately holding them down; that society is organized for the express purpose of thwarting and defeating them.

So our Henry joined the rank of the pessimists, and got much satisfaction out of telling how this and that prominent man had gone the way of iniquity.

Our Harriet and Henry pulled along indifferently as the years added to their problem hungry mouths to feed and shoes and clothing to be purchased for the multitudinous progeny that followed in their wake. All the poetry and sentiment had gone out of their lives, and the experiences of each day were chapters most tedious and prosaic.

And now, my young lady friends, I want to tell you a secret that many women never learn. When the fine sentiment of budding and maturing womanhood was with you, you borrowed the colors of the rainbow to adorn yourself, and studiously adopted every little amenity of life you knew about. You studied by day and by night the method of making yourself most attractive, because you wished to gain the favor of young men in general and of one young man in particular. When she has attained the end desired, the average woman folds

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

up the tinsel and the feathers, and allows the fine gowns to become seedy and moth eaten. She sheds off the poetry and sentiment of her life as the rose-bush sheds its gorgeous colored petals and its green leaves in preparation for the winter sleep, and retains only the dry branches, sometimes with thorns but poorly concealed. And when she goes to the ball or sociable, she thinks that society is conspiring against her because she is not sought out and patronized as she used to be. She does not reason that bees abandon the most gorgeous flower when the honey is all exhausted and the corolla begins to fade. She is trying to make water run up hill. And the man who was attracted by her charms and cast his lot with her has not the same zest as he used to have, and she thinks he has gone wrong and is neglecting his connubial duties.

Sometimes it is listlessness that causes women to go this way; sometimes it is unselfishness—the struggle to bestow comfort on her family rising to be the dominant factor in her life; sometimes it is the fault of others. But whatever the cause, it is wrong in principle. If the adoption of taste in dress and all the little amenities of life which give the charm to womanhood were necessary to fix the young man's attention before marriage the same



## HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE

principle holds true, with emphasis, after marriage. For the association which was only occasional has become constant, and the wish to be pleased has not diminished any by the change.

Thanks to the keener sense of life's proprieties possessed by the best type of our fine womanhood, I am not including all women in this category. I have described the method, I hope, of only a small minority, which shall be still more diminished as our more liberal education develops the idea of sex equality. When a woman learns to carry the charm of her youth into the struggle of all the years, it seems to me that she has found the true philosophy of life. The mission of woman is to preach the gospel of optimism and faith both by precept and example. But if she forsakes her birthright, and joins the ranks of the pessimists, and defies the laws of nature, she voluntarily abdicates the throne which society in all times and all places has accorded her the right to occupy.

And when men grow indifferent in the same way, and allow their clothing to grow seedy and their beards to grow long, and all the sentiment to go out of their life, they are flying in the face of a great social law, and they will have to pay the penalty, for the law of attraction and repulsion is as certain in

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

its application, as inexorable in its demands, as the law of gravitation.

And this was the fate of the young people we are describing. Only a few years and all the poetry and sentiment were gone, and the dull, tedious prose of each day added chapter after chapter to the meaningless record of their wasted lives.

Once the author of these memoirs was called professionally into their meagre home. A little unfortunate child lay at the point of death, and the mutual solicitude had momentarily spanned the great gulf that had opened between them.

These terrible death-bed tragedies that oftentimes come into our homes have the compensation that they bring a revivifying of faith and of all the better attributes of the soul. The dying child is an angel messenger, delivering back some of the glory of heaven before it bids its final adieu. In that hour of darkest trial and keenest suffering are born courage and resolution and faith. If we have strength of character, these will be permanent assets, but if we are weak, they will be but transitory emotions, surviving only while the broken sod keeps fresh the memory of our treasure who slumbers beneath the sanctified mound. And this home of squalor was glorious for a time with faith and resolution. But

## HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE

the dream of heaven was brief, and the old habitual groveling spirit came back again.

They showed me a picture taken on their wedding day—the bride with her orange blossoms and her fine array, and the groom in princely attire sitting manfully by her side. How proud they must have been of each other on that eventful day, and what dreams they must have had of the unfolding events of their opening career! If they could have had a vision of this desolation of a home as I saw it, I wonder if they could have endured the sight.

In the air castles they built, in the successes they anticipated, two important factors had been left out of their calculations. The transcendent importance of industry and of frugality had never dawned upon them.

The world has not much to bestow upon the man who will not work. It is the get-up-and-get that makes men great. Go to the home of the successful farmer and you will find the dews of the morning upon his rugged brow. You will see the last glimmer of evening's twilight fall upon him as he still bends over his unfinished task. Go to the home of the scholar and you will find him pouring over his books in the silent hours of the night when all the world besides is hushed in slumber. For God has

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

set a price upon everything in this world that is worth having, and he who would possess must pay the price of the thing he covets.

Again, the importance of frugality as a factor of success cannot be overestimated. If your compensation is a dollar a day, and you live on seventy-five cents a day, your credit will gradually grow as the balance of each day is added to your possessions. But if with an income of a dollar a day your expenditure is a dollar and a quarter a day, you will as certainly come to discredit as the night will follow the day. Nature deals with us justly but not mercifully. She makes cold mathematical deductions in her verdicts. She balances the ledger with unerring accuracy, and announces the verdict at the close of every day. She fixes our credit among men by these daily bulletins, and whether we will or not, we must submit to the rating she puts upon us.

Our friends had failed to comprehend the value of these fundamental principles of life. By slothfulness and waste they had reduced their possessions to the meagre equipment of a mean home where years of drudgery were endured without a hope of better days.

One would have thought that such an inheritance of such a home with all its perversion of sanity of

## HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE

life would represent the greatest misfortune that could come to the children who swarmed like ants around the meagre shack which was supposed to shelter them. One asks in the sight of God and men if it is really the right thing to bring into the world such a horde of unfit human beings, each one of whom adds to the importunities of all the rest. No inspired writer nor philosophical teacher has dared to dwell upon this vital social problem.

It is a strange thing in life that we are permitted by social usage freely to discuss and without hindrance to advocate almost everything that pertains to the material welfare of the human race. But the one most fundamental of all things, the reproduction of human beings, has been so hedged about by tradition that we have not dared to deal with its problems in a scientific way, and to offer suggestions for improvement.

It is a good augur for the future that the dim outlines of a science called eugenics have begun to take form. But the disciples of this new faith are as yet so modest and fearful of consequences that they make very few positive statements and hardly dare to advocate their principles for practical application.

And so the substance of the world continues to

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

be eaten up by an inferior breed, which often by the haphazard method we are following continues to deteriorate, while the best elements of our race physically and intellectually are shirking this responsibility of reproducing their kind. If any drover adopted such methods in breeding horses and cattle he would most assuredly make a failure.

When we can break over the traditional barriers and give as much thought to the welfare of the human race as we do to horses and cattle, we shall take a great stride forward in our civilization. Compared with the dark ages we may consider ourselves highly civilized, but compared with the possibilities easily within our reach we are barbarians.

For this unfortunate family whose experiences we have been detailing, there yet remained one calamity which was to cap the climax. Wearied with the hardship and toil and the disappointing circumstances of her life, the mother fell sick and died. The meagre comforts which she had managed to maintain were taken away, and the unfortunate children were left to the chance assistance of charitable friends, and the poor assistance they could bestow on one another.

It is hard to see Providence in such an occurrence, and yet we may judge wrongly by seeing only part

## HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE

of the picture. The cruel things in this world may have their counterpart in blessings hereafter, but the remote compensation does not altogether satisfy our mind. We wish to see justice and mercy put into action immediately. But the way of nature is one of postponement. We desire to see all people happy, but it is the decree of nature that many should suffer. Some time, some where, there must be a compensation, or the basis of this whole world fabric would be injustice and cruelty. We must not judge hastily the plan of which we see only a fragment. There is sufficient basis for that faith which sees eventually the triumph of justice and right in the manifest intelligence in the great process of the world construction. So much adaptation to purpose we cannot imagine without a beneficent end toward which it is directed. So perfect a knowledge of the intricate processes of nature would be incompatible with cruelty and injustice. We can afford to rest the case and await the elucidation which is to come somewhere in the process. Meantime it may be our lot to suffer and to supply some of the minor chords in the great symphony of life, and we should do it without complaining in the assurance that they are a necessary part of our growth.

And here at this crucial point we will leave this

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

unfortunate family group until the curtain rises again at the finale of this volume, where we will call the roll of all those who played the game of chance with the daisy's petals that morning in the summer sunshine. We shall bring them in review, after long years have rolled away, and witness the final outcome of their life's method.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE EASIEST WAY

I WISH now to summon another witness before this tribunal from the dim distant past. I want the jury which shall be my readers to hear the negative evidence of one whose life was a complete exemplification of what men ought not to be. For convenience we will call him Jim, and his date we will put back twenty years, though it might have been farther.

He was a boy of commanding personality, and had some generous impulses. He had depth of intellect, but not depth of character. He always seemed to move by the force of gravity in the way of least resistance, and when temptations came his way he simply capitulated without an effort to resist. Remorse he sometimes felt, and resolutions he sometimes made, but the temper of his mental steel was not good, and he could not maintain a negative reply when desires were calling.

In that one word "No" is summed up more that makes for success in life, for spiritual growth, for development of character, than in all the other words

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of our vocabulary. And yet there are comparatively few people who know when and where to use it without mistakes. The difference between the rich man and the beggar, whether remote or present; the difference between the drunkard and the man of sobriety; the difference between the saint and the sinner—is all a matter of the courage, or otherwise, to maintain a negative attitude toward the things we should rule out of our life.

Jim was the son of a mail contractor whose home was the rendezvous of gold seekers and gamblers and saloon men and all the riffraff that drift with the commercial current between mining camps. And this unwise father encouraged his son to lead the life of dissipation that was common with the men who made up his patronage.

Environment is such a potent factor in the development of men and women that one is tempted sometimes to rate all other conditions as very secondary to it. Especially is this true in the developmental period of boys and girls. The impetuous blood of youth is prone to defy restraint and to throw itself into that side of the balance which gives license to vice. Fortunately the same period of life is one susceptible in a marked degree to spiritual influences. The greatest responsibility that God has put

## THE EASIEST WAY

upon us is the arrangement of suitable environment for our boys and girls. And we shall have to answer for it in our own day and generation by the degree of respectability or dishonor that comes to the progeny that are to follow us.

When the old overland stage route was established through his native town, Jim became one of the drivers of the big coaches that were the real romance of the country roads. In those days the stage driver was the real aristocrat of the country. He wore high-topped boots, laundered shirts, and a wealth of silk handkerchiefs and fine cravats which were the envy of all the farmer boys whose revenues were far too limited to indulge in such luxuries.

And Jim was a dandy fellow as he swung his team of four prancing steeds and his big coach around the curves of the road. And all the girls looked at him with admiration, and coveted the least attention he deigned to pay them. At the country dance he was quite the center of attraction and all feminine eyes were upon him. His very recklessness had a charm about it, which captivated, and his pertinent phrases became a part of the village vernacular.

Unreasoning youth! how little did his associates and admirers dream that the very things that were

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

the means of his captivating them were to be the means of his undoing!

It was considered such a manly thing to smoke cigarettes, and on high occasions cigars, that Jim could not have maintained his exalted position in the juvenile mind for any time without acquiring these necessary accomplishments. A dandy stage driver without a cigarette could not be imagined. The self-satisfaction that is manifest in the way a young man holds his cigarette or cigar is a study in itself. The upcurling lip and the peculiar bend of his fingers as he rests between acts is the reflex of a mental condition most gratifying to the participant, but most ludicrous and obnoxious to the one who has to endure seeing him. Our Jim, like every other boy who takes up the smoking habit, discounted his chances for success in life by at least ten per cent.

The man who defined a cigarette as a fire at one end and a fool at the other was not far short of the truth. I have seen three men die of tobacco heart, and scores of others become mentally and physically disabled. The poison nicotine affects all people who expose themselves to its baneful influence, but it has a peculiar affinity for the tissue cells of certain individuals, and a selective action on different organs

## THE EASIEST WAY

of the susceptible person. If it is the heart that is selected, a mechanical difficulty soon develops which not infrequently proves fatal. If it is the brain cells that first manifest the poison, mental and moral degeneracy is the penalty. In fact, I believe that the moral fibre of any man who uses tobacco is damaged, and that he can never stand on the same level while he is under the influence of it that he did before. The cigarette fiend is discounted as a laborer, discredited as a thinker, and rated down as a moral risk. Not only that, but the cigarette is the wedge that opens the way for other vices, often of a more serious import.

The sequence of events from tobacco to whiskey was the way of this young man, as it is the way of countless thousands who begin by gentle gradation the downward course. An occasional drink at first seemed no impropriety, considering the kind of people he associated with. Why should not youth on certain occasions make merry the heart and lift the burden of care? And Jim fell into the delusion that has broken more hearts, paralyzed more homes, and marked more men for destruction than any other thing in this world. For a long time his drinking bouts were only occasional affairs, and in his lucid intervals he kept himself fairly decent. After each

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

wild orgie he suffered remorse and resolved that he would never repeat the process, but when the tempter came he capitulated each time with less and less resistance until his will power was completely overcome.

He centered his attentions on one of the good girls of the village, and she was completely captivated by him. His reckless disregard of all conventional things, his apparent pertinent rejoinder to friend and foe alike, his boast of pugilistic prowess, were all marks of manliness in her eyes, and in his very vices she saw the mark of independence and individuality. She thought she could reform him. She was warned by all the good matrons of the village, and the gray-haired men shook their heads in disapproval of her hopeless task, but she would not be advised. There was a magnetism in his touch, there was a charm in his glance, which held her spellbound as the bird is held by the eye of a serpent. She could not reason, she was swayed only by her emotion.

When years of suffering have taught their lesson, many women wake up to the folly of allowing sentiment to mask their judgment in this most important of all the ventures of their life. And yet the world wags on in the same old way, the moth flies to the

## THE EASIEST WAY

fatal flame, the experience of others will not teach us.

The woman who thinks she can reform a bad man by marrying him will be defeated every time. If he does not think enough of her to straighten up and walk the way of rectitude while she keeps him hoping and guessing, he will never straighten up when the prize is already in his possession beyond peradventure.

No, my young lady friend, if you are captivated by the charms of a reckless man, don't ever undertake the reform business by staking your soul and body on the issue, or you will simply throw yourself under the wheels of Juggernaut and be ground to powder. You can't afford such an experiment. The odds are too great against you.

I am writing this long after its occurrence, in the life of these young people. The wedding day was auspicious, and Jim looked a prince as he stood beside his beautiful companion, and she was all smiles and all hopes for the future, and the gray-haired men and the village dames forgot their gloomy forebodings in the poetry of the present hour. For a time the sunshine of love seemed to fall over their little domicile. The mutual satisfaction of being always together had brought a new force into their



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

lives and they dreamed and built air castles together.

These happy days did not last long. One day the old tempter came back again, and Jim came in with a swagger and a stupid smile, and began to curse and swear. The terrified young wife was all compassion as she covered his dishonored brow with kisses. She was sure that it was only a temporary lapse, and that the sunshine which was obscured by a passing cloud would come out as bright as ever. She did not think it of sufficient consequence to take a definite stand and issue an ultimatum. She did not comprehend that this was the beginning of the end of all happiness in her life.

And right here, it seems to me, she showed the weakness that has been the undoing of many a happy home. If she had been uncompromising in her attitude, if she had told him that this day he had to choose between her companionship and the demon of drunkenness, I believe he would have capitulated. No woman should be compelled by social custom or stereotyped law to be the forced companion of a drunkard, nor to have her home pauperized and her family dishonored by the selfish indulgence of a degenerate man. An uncompromising stand at the beginning would settle the matter for all time, and



## THE EASIEST WAY

I believe any woman would be justified in taking such a position.

A drunkard is a worse offender against society, in my judgment, than a thief. His delinquency is more imminent and far-reaching in its consequences than the crime of the man we send to jail for petty larceny. The thief does not apprehend the goods of poor people, because they have no chattels of commercial value to him. He takes from those who while they may feel the disappointment of being defrauded are yet possessed of all the necessities of life. But the man who wilfully takes the money which is the product of his toil, and which by the laws of God and nature belongs to a helpless wife and dependent children, and appropriates it to his own selfish, unrighteous purpose, is one who robs the needy and defrauds the defenseless. And if we send a thief to the penitentiary for a period of months or years to expiate his crime of misappropriation of the chattels of other people, we should have some form of punishment for the drunkard that would be proportionate to his offense. I believe there was wholesome discipline in the old-time whipping post, barbarous as it seemed, and for the sake of this kind of an offender it is a pity that such a speedy form of retribution could not be restored.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

When society collectively makes itself the arbiter of the rights of its units, and invokes its traditional laws to adjust differences that arise between them, it exercises a necessary and imperative function, but when society stands by and connives at this form of robbery, and shuts its eyes to the spectacle of pauperized women and suffering children, it is weak, nay, almost vicious in its indifference.

When the chance of education, of Christian training, of social recognition, of proper clothing, of quality and quantity of food to eat are all sacrificed to the unreasonable appetite of a human monster who has become lost to all the better instincts of life; when the family altar, which has been consecrated to love and devotion to a common cause, becomes a pandemonium of riot and vice and degeneracy through the selfishness of one individual, then society should step in and show its strong hand and adopt some remedy for this outrageous perversion. When we recall the fact that the vice of the drunkard does not end with his own life, but that he hands down to posterity the real physical defects that he has brought upon himself; that he often transmits epilepsy, dipsomania, insanity and a predisposition to crime, the duty of society becomes more imperative than ever.

## THE EASIEST WAY

In this particular home we are reviewing, the blight of the drunkard fell like a dark pall over it, and extinguished love and all the better instincts of life. Children were born to the inheritance of pauperism and went forth with the stamp of crime fastened upon them. It was much to their credit that they did not all go the highway of ruin. The wife became broken in spirit and looked like a faded flower. The family wardrobe was reduced to a collection of rags and tatters, the mere remnants of better days, and often the larder was completely depleted. Hunger was a sensation to which they became habituated, and the pinching cold of winter made inroads upon the unfortunate victims of this most unhappy home. Jim had no regular employment, because people could not depend on him. Laziness always finds an excuse for itself in the claim that other people have prevented its victim from having any opportunity. And this was the refuge of our poor degenerate Jim as he walked the streets in the garb of a vagabond, and sank lower in the social scale with the declining sun of each day.

He had a habit of buying things always on credit, and never seemed to have any intention of paying for them. He made promises daily which he never intended to fulfill.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

In high places as well as in low places there are people who never grasp the significance of credit as a factor in their success, and of lack of it as a factor in their failures. The confidence that people have in your honesty is the equivalent in financial potency of a balance to your credit in the bank. When emergencies come in your finances you can draw upon it, just as you can draw on a bank account. But when your credit is gone the world looks with little mercy on your importunity. No matter how urgent the need, people will not lend to a man who has proved himself a bad paymaster.

Jim had "run his face" wherever he could get people to trust him. Creditors were always pressing him and making demands which he was utterly unable to satisfy. Every cent he produced by fair means or foul went into the coffers of the saloon-keeper, and even the wages of his unfortunate wife, when she made heroic efforts to emancipate herself, were appropriated whenever he had opportunity to get possession of them. Thus years of suffering and dishonor wore themselves away in this degrading process. And still society demanded that the galling bonds which held innocent people to such an obligation were indissoluble. That the outraged wife and children must honor and obey a man

## THE EASIEST WAY

who had descended below the level of the brutes, that they must submit to continue in the process of destruction though every day they were brought lower and lower in dishonor, was altogether wrong.

I think our fundamental error in such cases lies in our failure to give drunkenness its proper magnitude in the category of crimes and to recognize from the far-reaching effects of it, that it is a felony more destructive to society than arson or theft; that the degeneration of it does not end with the perpetrator, but is handed down to generations yet unborn. The daily offerings at this family altar were tears and pitiful appeals, but they were all to no purpose. God has surely forsaken that home where a drunken demon is enthroned as guardian and protector.

There was one consolation that came out of the direst distress of this blighted family circle. Jim, the unworthy author of all their afflictions, was charitable enough to run away and leave them. He drifted about with the irregular criminal element and plunged into all the excesses known to that order of society. To implore the aid of the people in the streets and make his rounds as a common beggar seemed now no impropriety to him, who had once held his head erect in the satisfaction of fine manhood. And to spend the money bestowed by char-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

itable hands to assuage hunger at the nearest grog shop seemed no compromise of dignity.

When the drunkard reaches a certain level in his downward career he ceases to be governed by any moral code and recognizes no rule of society for his guidance. Animals even of the lowest type are true to their instincts, which are the unwritten laws of their life. But the drunkard has not a single instinct that is not vitiated and perverted. He sinks in this way to a level far beneath the brute creation, and wallows in the ooze and slime of the lowest dregs of animal life.

To me this is one of the saddest stories in the volume of human existence. To see the human form, which was created in the image of God, shriveled with a self-inflicted blight; to see faith and charity and all the better feelings of life all submerged in the terrible maelstrom of drunkenness; to see reason dethroned and a demoniacal possession substituted for the personality that once was possessed of God-like powers in embryo with untold possibilities for the future. The recording angel must blush as he flies up to heaven's chancery with the word.

To commit suicide in the face of such a condition would seem like the only rational thing to do.

## THE EASIEST WAY

Indeed, the only commendable thing we have to say about the last years of him whose biography we are reviewing is that he mustered up courage enough to put a bullet through his brain and stop the terrible escapement which was vibrating to such an unholy purpose.

What a queer thing is the crime of suicide! To the mind possessed of all its normal attributes it is hard to comprehend the view point of the one who sees such desperation in his present circumstances that he chooses this tragic and most unnatural way of exit from this world. Suicide is ordinarily the work of a coward, but it may be the last culminating act of a hero. When it is chosen as the way of escape from the natural and inevitable consequence of perversions in our life; when it becomes the subterfuge by means of which to avoid the necessity of living down or rectifying the mistakes we have made, it is a cowardly act, bespeaking a soul of depravity. And the ignomy of it increases with the magnitude of the obligation escaped. The man who has a wife and family depending daily on the product of his toil is little short of a monster when he shirks his moral obligation in this tragic way, and throws them, with one desperate stroke at his jugulars, on the mercy of the world for all the years to come.



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

We can imagine, and indeed history records, instances in which souls of the highest nobility have chosen rather to destroy themselves than to capitulate to dishonor, or to be degraded by others. The old Japanese tradition of the propriety of self-destruction when the loss of all honor is weighed in the balance against it, though apparently one of the survivals of barbarous ages, has yet something in it to challenge our admiration if not our approval. Suicide links itself so closely with insanity, that we may rightly assign to it a place in the great majority of cases with the mental aberrations.

And indeed it seems not improbable to me that it might be a manifestation of one of the great conservative laws of nature, to eliminate from society in a feasible way some of its unprofitable units. When a vessel at sea has become of no further use as a conveyer of passengers or of merchandise, to allow it to drift as a hulk aimlessly on the waves would not only be a useless thing but it would be a dangerous thing, threatening always the integrity of other vessels. And so we dismantle and reduce it to safety by destroying it as a distinct entity. It might be that Nature in her great far-reaching processes is exercising some such Providential foresight, and implanting the desire for self destruction in the mind



## THE EASIEST WAY

which has not only become useless, but has become vicious.

Let me not be misunderstood. I am not writing the vindication of the ignoble soul who dodges his moral responsibilities by this kind of subterfuge, nor am I condoning such an unnatural action. I am simply suggesting that the apparent paradoxes in nature may have their purpose, and no doubt do fit into a great beneficent plan which our limited perspective fails to grasp in its full significance.

Let us take one last farewell look, before the curtain falls, at the mortal remains of him who was so bright and promising and prepossessing in his youth. In a city far away, in the potter's field, he is buried, without rite or ceremony. No tear of pity was shed as he went ignobly down to his last long rest, and was known to the world no more. Let us hope that in the plan of redemption there may be propitiation for even such as he, and that the dark blot of crime may be lifted from his brow, and that he may have another chance to be free from the terrible thralldom which crept so insidiously and imperceptibly into his life and blighted all its chances.

## CHAPTER V

### RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

**I**SUMMON now another witness. I call for one more of the old familiar group who conjured with the daisy's petals, and a fine physical type of a boy comes forth from the halls of memory with all the promptness of a magician's bidding, and seats himself upon the witness stand ready to be interrogated.

There is not much in a name. The most commonplace appellation becomes glorious when it is the indicator of a great soul, and the most euphonious combination of syllables becomes discordant to our ears when it is the indicator of an inferior being.

We will choose at random the name Joseph for this friend of bygone days and hide his personality under this biblical appellation.

Joseph was the son of a wealthy man and had a brother who had attained to great distinction in legislative and diplomatic circles.

And Joseph was very proud of the family name, and thought that the social and financial standing of his people were personal assets that everybody

## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

should acknowledge and give proper consideration to in their estimate of him. He estimated rightly this misjudgment of the human mind, which cannot get away from the fallacy of coats of arms, or of distinguished pedigrees in its rating of the individual man.

Heredity, we admit, has its bearing on mental and moral traits. The birthright of each man is the accumulated soul momentum of the progenitors before him back to the first pair. But when a man flaunts his pedigree and the worldly possessions of his relatives as a claim for recognition it is generally an indication that he has forfeited his birthright and acknowledged himself a satellite ready and willing to revolve around somebody else, and not a luminary to give out light himself.

To come of a noble pedigree is no palliation of your condition, if you yourself are a vagabond. To hang rags and tatters on the family tree, does not adorn it, nor do the rags and tatters profit any by the conspicuous contact.

As a student, Joseph was a drifter without rudder or helm to guide him. He followed the lines of least resistance, and when he met with obstacles in the way, instead of bending his energies for their removal, he simply angulated around them and went

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

on as if nothing had happened. The farmer who plows around the old stumps and leaves them to hamper the work of future years will never have much of a farm. And the man in any profession who does not clear the way before him and go down to the very foundation of things, and take full possession of the fundamentals will have the same limitations as the man who leaves stumps in his field.

Particularly is this true in the work of the student. The underlying principles of all our arts and sciences are simple and easy to comprehend. In the science of mathematics we deal first with the four elementary principles, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; and with these as a stock in trade we proceed to all those processes of reasoning which end in calculus and conic sections. And yet the whole science of mathematics—a science so beautiful in its elucidation, and so grand and comprehensive in its scope that it reaches over the abyss of untold millions of miles and deals with the fixed stars of the firmament—is comprehended in the different application of those four fundamental principles, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Education is evolution. Its accretions accumulate on the inductive plan. We master the fundamental

## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

facts, and then proceed to discover those comprehensive laws which correlate these facts into an interdependent system. I say advisably that we discover those laws, for the true student rises to his own generalizations, and enjoys the thrill and feels all the emotion of a new discovery every time he puts facts together and establishes in his mind the law that correlates them. Education is beautiful to the one who gets that lucid insight into the fundamentals, which makes their combination into generalizations easy and direct. But to the groveling mind which always sees through a glass dimly, it is a drudgery, irksome and without pleasure.

When we go from the theoretical world into the practical, when we meet the really serious problems of life, our mastery of fundamentals tells with greater precision than ever.

We see the surgeon apply his knife, and we marvel at the accuracy with which he cuts all around the vital organs, when a human life would be the forfeiture for the least error in the direction of his incision.

If we follow the career of that surgeon from its inception as a medical student we will find him pacing his floor in the midnight hours, rehearsing to himself the facts of anatomy until he is driven

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

almost to madness by the dead memory task. That was the price he had to pay to become a surgeon. Instinctively he knew what it would cost and was willing to make the sacrifice. It is the mastery of fundamentals that makes the surgeon's work easy. Without that he would bungle and hesitate.

We read with pleasure the beautiful mellifluous cadences of a Gray's Elegy and wonder at the natural gift of the man who could produce such a poem. On the night before his great battle on the heights of Abraham, General Wolf, as he drifted down the Saint Lawrence River with his brave men who were the next day to see him immortalized in the hour of his death, rehearsed a stanza from this beautiful poem, and then said, "I would rather be the author of that than to whip the French tomorrow." But if we go into the history of this masterpiece of our English poesy, we shall find the man Gray for fourteen years studying the manners and customs of rural folk, and adjusting and readjusting his stanzas over all that period of time.

When we receive with satisfaction the final product, we do not stop to think of all the elements that have gone into it. But the painstaking worker is always rewarded for his diligence. Labor has its sure mead. We love to do the things we know how

## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

to do. Work is not drudgery when it involves the application of principles that have grown into our life, by long continued thought and attention *Irksomeness is born of ignorance, and the man who works muscles without brains will always be a slave.*

Our friend Joseph was wont to borrow the answers of problems from his neighbor to the right or to the left, contenting himself with the thought that the teacher had been deceived, and that he would get full credit for his ready preparation. It did not dawn on him that his whole life was to be a reflex of that deception, and that he would be called upon to render account for the uttermost farthing of that fraudulent advantage which he thought he had gained.

The most foolish person in this world is the one who deceives himself. There was a boy from a country village who is to figure in the later pages of this little book, who used to furnish Joseph with a great bulk of his school work ready for recitation. He was an unpretending plodder without adornment of person or manner, but with a soul that hungered for the truth. Joseph was boon companion to this boy in their room when he needed assistance, but when he met him in the public highways or the social gatherings he did

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

what the priest did in the parable of the good Samaritan—passed by on the other side.

When years had rolled away, and this plodding boy had risen to distinction, and Joseph had acknowledged defeat in his life's struggle, and had narrowed his sphere of action down almost to the vanishing point and his circle of associates to a mean faction of the baser sort in a village, they met again in a great crowd, and Joseph was not only anxious to do him homage publicly but paid him such a compliment as he had rarely received even from his most devoted friends.

When we look back on our school days, particularly we of the country extraction, we have vivid memories of those who were kind to us when we were unknown quantities, and had no claim on anything but the magnanimity of the more fortunate ones who had already attained to social prestige.

To be courteous to a green country boy, and treat him with due consideration requires a certain nobility of soul, which the great multitude do not possess. I have been through the process, and know the feeling that comes into the life of the new recruit when he meets with one of those rare individuals who take him into their confidence, and treat him as a comrade. In my memory there shall ever be



## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

fresh a few persons, who did not disdain me in those days of misgiving and overweening fear, when I first came from the country village with the odor of the farm on my clothing, and found myself at a disadvantage in the presence of the boys and girls who had been reared in the cities. How many of those butterflies have I seen to fold up their gaudy wings and settle down as dull grubs of the earth to creep and crawl the rest of their mortal career. Some of those stories are really pitiful. But they never dreamed of such contingencies in the hour of their glory. They soared aloft unmindful of the imprisoned chrysalis that were one day to break open their cocoons and join the ranks. Their disdain was unmerciful.

But there were a few, thanks to the better side of humanity, who did not disavow the country boys and girls. My memory shall ever cherish their names. Some of them have fallen asleep long ago, and are known only by the remembrance of their noble bearing. And some of them have grown into the full estate of manhood and womanhood, and the nobility which characterized their lives as boys and girls has told out through all the years, and they have become grand men and women. I never meet such a one that I do not have a feeling of

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

veneration come over me ; a feeling of adoration that amounts almost to worship.

Our Joseph knew not much of the strenuous side of life. He loved to indulge himself in long morning slumbers, and to rouse himself in time only to swallow a hasty breakfast and rush off to try and answer to the morning roll call, which he often missed by a considerable margin. He never seemed to realize how much worry he could have eliminated from his life by being five minutes ahead of time always instead of that much behind time.

When we have to catch a train or meet some important appointment, it is so easy to make our plan so that it brings us with a margin of a few minutes to the good, and we can maintain the dignity and the equanimity of our minds so perfectly with that kind of arrangement, that it is a wonder any sane person should inflict upon himself the discomfiture of procrastination. The mental force we dissipate by the worry of being late is a constant drain upon our vital reserve, which tells with great effect in the sum total of our achievements.

When we begin the activities of the day it is an easy matter to lay out our plan in order, to string our daily events on the mental rosary, so that everything will fall into its proper sequence, and no one

## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

thing will intrench upon the domain of another. To subordinate all other things to the one thing we have in hand, and focus the whole energy of our mind upon it, is the way to make a success of it. But the dabbler who tries to focus on half a dozen different things at once is the one who will diffuse his mental energy and bring nothing to speedy execution.

Our Joseph had been fondled and pampered by an over indulgent mother so much that he made a careful study of his own comfort, and never was known to do anything that had the least element of self-sacrifice or self-abnegation in it. And right here is where he ran counter to one of the very fundamental elements of success.

The young man who cannot suffer cold and hunger and fatigue at times without complaining; who cannot put in extra shifts when he has a rush order, and supplement the day by splicing on a part of the night if occasion requires, might as well write his name on the plebeian list, and content himself to be rated as a failure.

The over-anxious mother, who is so mindful of every comfort of her son that she cannot bear to think of his ever being hungry or cold or tired, is one of the greatest impediments to the growth of that son one could imagine. It is out of these very

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

strenuous things that he is to develop character if he is ever going to have any; and in its ultimate effects her over-kindness is the worst sort of cruelty.

The mother whose overweening compassion forbids the pain that is incident to the correction of crooked feet when her child is born with that deformity, is the most cruel person we can imagine, when we think of the far reaching effects of her supposed kindness. The temporary physical suffering which could have been washed away by a few childish tears is transformed into a mental anguish which knows no mitigation for the rest of the natural life. The parent who permits his son to taste sometimes the strenuous side of life, to know some privations, to be familiar with fatigue and hunger and any other discomfort incident to the struggle for success is the one who is the boy's real benefactor in the end.

And so the young man who has been pampered in his home and spoiled and taught the way of comfort and ease will in the great majority of cases suffer the anguish of defeat in years to come when there is no help for his condition.

When we go out from under the parental roof, and have to stand on our own responsibility against

## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

the stern realities of life, we will find that the world is not made of sugar and water. We will have to encounter privations and discomforts and disappointments, and if our training has been such that we are entirely unprepared for these things we are most pitiable creatures.

Our Joseph was wont sometimes to be unmindful of others in his effort at self-gratification, and to neglect those little amenities of life which are so essential to the profession of being a gentleman. Particularly was this true when he dealt with those he regarded as inferior to himself. To him it seemed quite a matter of indifference that he should display the selfish, ungentlemanly side of his nature when dealing with them, even though it was good policy to feign the attributes of a perfect gentleman when he dealt with the class of boys and girls he regarded as his equals or superiors.

And this is the real crucial test of a gentleman. It requires no effort on the part of anybody to be polite to those he is anxious to please. But to extend the same courtesies to the forlorn boy or girl of the lower intellectual levels, or to the vagabond who has chosen the way of ignorance and rags or who had it thrust upon him, requires a magnanimity of soul which stamps its possessor

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

with that inborn refinement that is the only indicator of true gentility.

In European travel you sometimes meet with persons of the so-called upper classes, who will respond to your courteous request for information about your street number, or the road you should choose, by elevating their chin, and walking by with a look of disdain in their countenance and an air of utter indifference to your pressing need for the information which they could easily impart. Instead of being classed as a duke or a lord such an individual should be regarded as a savage. The wild man of the forest has more of the real elements of the gentleman in his make up, than these particular barbarians of the type I am speaking about, who imagine themselves set apart by nature on a plane above the level of common folk, with the prerogative of reply or contemptuous disdain as a natural birthright. I concede to them no such distinction.

A courteous bearing is one of the greatest factors of success in life. And those very people who do not appear to have any legitimate claim upon our attention will often prove to be the means of our access to others whose patronage we rightly covet. In the game of life hearts are always trumps. Words of

## RAGS ON THE FAMILY TREE

kindness are like bread cast upon the waters. After many days they will come back. It is wise to speak cordially and make social overtures to every respectable person we meet. The great man and the small man alike are pleased to have attention paid to them. Once in a while we may meet churls who show their teeth and resent friendly advances, but we can deal with them just as we do with a donkey that kicks at us—keep our composure and pass by and commiserate his lot for being a donkey.

Europe with its artificial social classification has adopted the stupid method of social seclusiveness, and people often spend hours together in the close contact which travel imposes without speaking to each other. Each one is afraid to speak to his neighbor to the right or to the left for fear he might be snubbed by a duke or a lord. Eastern America has in a great measure aped the same stupidity and fallen into the same method. It has remained for the great developing west to point out the fraternal bond, which is at once the birthright and the pleasant duty of all respectable people, and with disregard of all conventionalities to develop the true spirit of comradeship among men.

Our Joseph appeared to be lucky in at least one thing. He gained the affections of a lovable girl.



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

After the school days were ended, and we all went our several ways to begin the serious work of life, he journeyed far over the mountains and brought our much admired Lenora to be his life's companion.

As a social factor the high school and college have served a very useful purpose in this one thing, that it brings together from sections remote and near young men and young women of all classes, and associates them in that intellectual and social contact which enables them to choose their affinities. The high school has been the great social kneading board where all the social atoms have been mixed together and each brushing up against the others, titrated and retitrated until it found its affinity, if there were any affinity for it to find. The baking process was a later development, and some of those combinations have turned out to be dough, and some have turned sour, and some have worked up into the most perfect product. The intellect-leaven permeates the whole lump, and starts the processes of development going, and some of the molecules continue to respond to it, and to vibrate with a greater and greater amplitude as the years roll by, and some grow indifferent and vibrate less and less until they become dead and cold.

The matter of affinities is one that interests every-



## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

body, and at one period of every life assumes transcendent importance. Most of the meetings and partings in this life are a matter of chance, some of them I believe a matter of destiny, and but few of them a matter of deliberate arrangement. We discover our affinities something after this manner:

If in a room where a piano is standing we produce a sound from some other sonorous instrument, and listen, as the vibrations die away, there will be one key of that piano that is giving back the same tone, while all the other keys of the instrument are silent. The one wire which by its texture and tension can take up the sympathetic vibrations is the only one that gets the sonorous message from its kindred viol or harp. The two are perfectly attuned to each other and exist in a condition of sympathetic rapport.

And this is a symbol of our life's experiences. In the gamut of life we meet with those who give back our thoughts and reflect our emotions, because they are attuned by nature to vibrate at the same amplitude that we are. These are our affinities. These are they we take into the sanctum sanctorum of our souls, and reveal to them the hidden springs of our life, knowing that we shall find sympathy. These are they we link together into the select

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

circle of our real friends. As we migrate on the pathway of life we gather them around one by one, and put them on our heart string as the devotee strings beads on her rosary.

The rest of the gamut of life we meet in the rialto of social and commercial barter. We touch their lives by necessity or by choice, and render to them all those amenities which society demands and which gentle breeding dictates, but they never touch our inner life. We deal with them for mutual advantage in a material way, but the merchandise of the soul we do not exchange with them. They are separated from our inmost life by a void which nature has not filled in, and which no amount of effort is able to bridge over.

Affinities may be of the same lineal descent, born under the same roof, and nurtured in the same domicile, or their extraction may be, as it commonly is, very remote from each other. The bond of affinity may link together souls in the connubial relationship, and when its units are carefully selected, so that each is the counterpoise of the soul, vibrations of the other, it finds its most perfect manifestation. There is nothing in all this world so beautiful as the matrimonial alliance between two souls who are perfect affinities. But to see people flying in the

## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

face of the laws of nature, and trying to wed together what God never intended for counterparts is the daily farce which society never ceases to repeat to its own detriment. This is the one greatest factor for rounding out the record of the divorce court year by year. People are trying to make water run up hill, and the pious folk are upbraiding them because they are unable to do it.

I am surprised that nature has not provided a means of more careful selection, so that affinities generally, instead of occasionally, should mate together. Perhaps Socrates was right when he thought to develop forbearance by marrying a shrew. But the average mortal would be willing to get along without the forbearance, rather than to pay such a price for it. In a lesser degree there may be an advantage in a matrimonial alliance of two people of different temperaments, if they have some common ground to stand on, some part of their soul vibrations that finds mutual counter-balance. But God pity that unfortunate home where husband and wife are entirely and completely the antithesis of each other. The divergence of such a couple is like the lines of a triangle; the farther you follow them the greater becomes their separation. And

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

that repulsive force which drives apart husband and wife is generally communicated to their offspring, and the whole family group find themselves subtending the outer circumference of a centrifuge, the diameter of which increases in length as the years roll by.

This latter condition was the lot of our Joseph and Lenora, after the play-life was ended, and they settled down to the serious problems of life.

She was gentle and refined, and gracious in her bearing, with a sensitive soul, on all points, of justice and honor; while he had that element of elasticity in his conscience which made it easy for him to adapt himself to little unscrupulous things for petty personal ends.

He thought it was all right to cheat, and to take advantage of the credulity or of the necessity of others, provided he could so conceal his act that the multitude would not know about it. He believed that there is a commercial value to falsehood when it is properly safeguarded. He would have been horrified at this expression of his motives, but secretly to himself he must have thought it out in this very way. And the community where he lived was not slow to discover these innate weaknesses in his character, and to put upon him the proper

## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

rating. The man who thinks he can cheat and tell lies and not be found out is a fool. A lie will proclaim itself sooner or later from the housetop, and a fraudulent action will read itself into the popular estimation of any man in spite of himself.

When two persons of such divergent temperament meet, there is sure to be conflict. The dove who finds herself mated with a hawk will soon discover the hopelessness of the task of reforming him, and give up in despair. If the divergence is not so diametrical, and the contracting parties are willing to subdue themselves, and to give and take, and withal to be tolerant of one another, there is a possibility of establishing common ground enough to make life endurable. But when dishonor links itself with honor, vice with virtue, gross vulgarity with refinement, cold selfishness with benevolence, there is formed a combination that can never in the nature of things be compatible. And these were the elements which Joseph and Lenora were trying to harmonize; these were the heterogeneous mental components which they proposed to work up into a homogeneous mixture.

But the faith that was born of infatuation was soon to discover its own defeat. The artificial semblance of refinement which Joseph maintained

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

through the nuptial period needed only a suitable occasion to show that it was only a sham. And occasions came thick and fast.

Profanity is such a senseless thing that one wonders how people of sanity can indulge in it. If they do not believe in a God it is silly to swear by his name, and if they do believe in a God it is sacrilege to do so. The reason men swear, I imagine, is that it gives them a chance in an emphatic way to show their defiance of the traditions of the church; to demonstrate their independence of all those traditional rules of conduct which society collectively has culled from the best precepts of the past and demanded of its subjects as a mark of respectability. The profane man would have you know that if he chooses to go to hell cross lots it is nobody's business but his own, and he does not choose to be hampered in his privilege.

Our Joseph was given to profanity, at first only periodically, but later habitually. Falsehood came close in the wake of it, and was soon so flagrant that no effort was made to conceal it.

The old saying that birds of a feather flock together is wonderfully true to life. Joseph gathered about him a group of reckless men who prided themselves on being the common

## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

enemy of religion and of all people who stood for the better ideals of society. He became an apostate from the faith of his fathers, and fought with all the venom of his perverted nature the cause which had brought his parents through untold hardships and privations over the trackless plains and planted them in an undeveloped country to endure all the trials of pioneering. This they did to provide in advance for his comfort and well-being.

It would be unjust to demand of us that we think the same thoughts and hold the same opinions that our fathers have done. The world would not progress very much with such a method. As the world grows in experience, we must expand in our mental horizon to keep pace with it. But our expansion should be dignified and tolerant. We should not ridicule the opinions of those we dissent from, and especially those opinions which have meant so much in the lives of our gray haired parents, who suffered all things for their loyalty to a cause, which no matter what it meant to others was a potential moral force to them. The apostate who justifies the irregularities of his own perverted life by attacking the creed he was born and bred in is a traitor at heart no matter what the creed he is attacking.

In my experience apostates from any of the creeds



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

have been among the most bitter and vindictive people I have ever known. And Joseph was no exception to the rule. He became the inveterate enemy of all authority, ecclesiastical or secular. He read into the lives of all men who held positions of trust motives of the basest kind, and gnashed his teeth as he related their alleged misdeeds. He was like the Bible description of Esau—his hand was against every man, and every man's hand was against him. The very ostracism that grew out of his relentless raillery was interpreted as a deliberate conspiracy against him. Everybody and everything seemed wrong except himself. His diminutive soul arrayed itself against all the better instincts of life. The importunity of the poor and the needy fell upon deaf ears when any appeal came up to him. He disclaimed any responsibility for their condition, and shifted accordingly all obligation for their relief. If God made the poor, he used to say, then God should provide the means to maintain them. He was entirely blind to the fact that charity is a greater blessing to the one who gives than to the one who receives. From the standpoint of the beggar, our gift which relieves his hunger is the gratification of a passing desire, and to-morrow he is back at



## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

the same old place, with the same old desire gnawing at his vitals.

I once had a friend who, as he was driving on a country road, met a huge muscular young fellow trudging along in the role of tramp. My friend stopped his carriage when the young man accosted him and begged for a ride. "Where are you going?" inquired the man in the carriage, and the tramp replied: "I don't know; I have no place to go; I am drifting somewhere." "If I were to spend the strength of my horse to pull you seventeen miles and put you down in the town where I am going," said my friend, "you would be no nearer your destination than you are now. You might as well be where you are."

And from the standpoint of the beggar this is just about what our indiscriminate charity amounts to. We assuage the hunger of to-day, but to-morrow the morsel we gave is gone, and the same sense of hunger is back worse than ever. We do even worse than that. For each time a human being stultifies his soul to beg gifts from another human being he takes a stride downward in the way of humiliation and soul-distintegration, which tends to bring about the total extinction of all semblance of character.

Mendacity is a continuous discount on manhood.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

From a par value of one hundred per cent, which is the birthright of each individual, the first offense strikes out ninety per cent, and the remainder soon shrinks to the zero mark. The only charity that is really in the interest of the recipient is a provision whereby he can help himself, and return value received for the benefit bestowed.

Your free gifts to beggars and donations to sots are in their ultimate results not charitable but baneful. The bestowal of benefits in the proper way is a social problem which has not yet been solved. But to us as individuals comes the daily prayer of the afflicted, and we are expected to act in the present moment. This hungry man cannot to-day undo the errors of his life, though he is well aware that his present plight is a result of them. But he must have food to-day or he will famish. The error I am obliged to commit to prevent him from starving is an inevitable result of the failure of society to give him a chance to help himself. I cannot inaugurate a system in a moment, but I can relieve a suffering fellow creature of his hunger whenever I will. By a social error which I am in no way responsible for I am obliged to conspire against the integrity of his soul whenever I put forth my hand to relieve his affliction.

## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

But to me who has this priceless opportunity of soul discipline, there is to be a lasting benefit, not to be measured by worldly standards. Whenever I can sacrifice my own feelings and take up the cause of another human being who is in need, the consciousness of the role I am playing as benefactor—as savior—leaves its impression upon my mind and augments my stock of character. The beggar gets a transient benefit which to-morrow is no benefit at all, but my reward is eternal. My tenure of worldly possessions is transient, but the assets of my soul are self-perpetuating and will endure forever. And this phase of charity is just what men of small souls never can comprehend. When by accident or by external pressure they are moved to do a generous deed, they seek an immediate reward by sounding a trumpet, that the multitude might praise them, and thereby increase their credit among men. They choose the baubles of this world in lieu of the riches of eternity for their reward and do not recognize the error.

And this was the unfortunate mental condition of him whose life we are reviewing. He took advantage of every opportunity that presented itself to gouge and defraud his neighbors, until they lost all confidence in him. Friendship was an unknown

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

quantity in his life. The love of his fellow man he never dreamed of. The lust of gain was the one thing that overshadowed his soul completely. And the generous hearted Lenora found herself hedged about so completely that she had to shrink down to his dimensions for the peace of her home. If she had been possessed of more strength of character, she might have asserted herself and dominated the situation, but she allowed herself to be completely overshadowed by this man of strong impulses, and her fine personality was buried amidst the chaotic contents of their inhospitable home. All the poetry of youth went out of her life, and the fine sentiment which had woven itself into the fabric of her dreams. Days of emptiness were followed by nights of regret. The years multiplied over her, the finger of Time made rude tracings on her countenance, and the early autumn frosts played havoc with her golden tresses.

If the young woman of twenty summers, with all the charms that accompany her age and sex could see the disintegrating process of the next twenty years as I have seen them on numerous occasions; if she could see the young man of her dreams skulk like a coward, when he was confronted with situations where courage was demanded; if she could see

## DRIFTING WITHOUT A RUDDER

selfishness dominating his life, vice sapping his strength, improvidence dissipating his substance; she would stop to ponder well the consequences of that fatal step, which is to place her happiness entirely in the keeping of another. Fortunately this picture is an extreme one, and the full measure of its unfortunate development is not often duplicated in actual experience, but in a lesser degree the direful consequences of matrimonial misalliances are everywhere to be seen. People are selling out their birthright of happiness and satisfaction for apples of the Dead Sea which all too soon turn to ashes.

If our winsome Lenora could have but projected her mind twenty years into the future, and seen the appalling picture of her home that was to be, faith nullified and all the better instincts of life blotted out; if she could have seen her children bred in selfishness and schooled in dishonor; if she could have seen the premature markings of the finger of time upon her once comely countenance as she now sees them; if she could have seen herself bending beneath the weight of years at a time when she should have been in the zenith of her glory, I think she would have annulled that fatal contract which held in its fulfillment such direful consequences.

Let us drop the curtain now in the hope that the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

full measure of her discomfiture has been realized, and that the future years may provide some mitigation for that situation which has so far been full of disappointment and distress.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE GREATER SATISFACTION

I HAVE issued a special venire. I am calling up whom I will of the old familiar group for witnesses. In the language of scripture I say, "Samuel, Samuel, where art thou?" And in my memory there comes up the picture of a splendid boy, whose heroism in the lowly walks of life, and whose magnanimity of soul were beautiful to contemplate. We will take only a look into his majestic life as I see it now in perspective, and then behold him crossing the bar, with all his spiritual canvas stretched to the breeze, illuminated with faith and prescience supernatural. We will draw from his life and from his death such lessons of philosophy as they suggest, and open our minds, I trust, to whatever truth they may indicate. If the story of his life and death seems overdrawn, the reader must remember that facts are sometimes stranger than fiction.

He was one of those precocious souls, who come over the social horizon and display their spiritual glory as the comet comes out of the abyss to illum-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

inate briefly the midnight sky and then recedes into the great unknown, leaving only the memory behind to fix itself in our consciousness.

Samuel was the son of a widow, who was left in poverty to battle with the world and to provide the ways and means of supporting a large group of helpless children, and he was the mainstay of the family. He was slender of stature, frail and weakly, but he had a soul in him that was great and noble.

Among the men and women who toil there are some of the kings and queens of the earth, judged by the motives and methods of their lives, and the things that in their limited sphere they accomplish. I take off my hat to the toiler who works with a lofty purpose, no matter how circumscribed the sphere in which he is held. The boy who fights the battles of a widowed mother and helpless brothers and sisters, is a hero, no matter what the world may say of his low estate. Capacity he may or may not have, but a soul of transcendent nobility can never be denied him.

And this brave lad whom the boys called Sam was such a one. As farmer, as sheep-herder, as man of all work he toiled incessantly, and every dollar of his meagre wages went into the family coffer. He was content to go in rags and tatters, to endure



## GREATER SATISFACTION

hunger and cold and all kinds of privation to maintain the family respectability. He was willing to forego schools, to live in the wilderness as a hermit, to work winter as well as summer, that the younger and more dependent members of the household might acquire the rudiments of an education, and thus be better prepared to make their way in the world.

Goodness of this kind is not born of precept, is not the result of example. It is an inborn quality of the soul, a gift from God. Heredity in this case had nothing to do with it. The father was a worthless wretch who early forsook the family and became a common vagabond, and the mother was quite mediocre in her mentality, and was possessed of no particular characteristics of mind or soul to distinguish her from the humble class to which she belonged.

Heredity and environment are supposed to be the two great factors in the mental make up of people. But when we have given full credit to these and strained a point to make them fit in with peculiar conditions there is still a residuum of characteristics unexplained, a birthright from the great unknown source of mental power, an endowment direct from the hand of the Creator. The appearance of those

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

meteor-like intellects that come sometimes from the abyss and project themselves athwart the heavens and startle the world, are not the product of environment. They are quite the antithesis of that. And when we explain them from the standpoint of heredity, and say that they represent mental characteristics converging from away back, we draw on our imagination for explanations we can by no means substantiate.

Sam was not a reader of books, for his limited income and the pressing necessities of his kindred forbade the purchase of them. But the great open book of nature was his daily instructor, and he read from its pages a message simple and direct, untrammelled by the phraseology of the pedants. His mind was not burdened with a painful Latin nomenclature of flowers, but his soul vibrated to the amplitude of the daisy and the bluebell and the sweet William that grew upon his native heath. The song of every bird and the murmur of every brook found a response in his untutored soul. He was kindred to everything that is beautiful and harmonious and true.

Who shall say that the world did not have as much for him as for the academic folk? Who shall call him ignorant who opens his soul to the truth

## GREATER SATISFACTION

and thrills with every vibration of mellifluous sound and harmonious color. What does education do for us but to teach us how to appreciate? And if we have the instinct of appreciation already with us, then nature has anticipated our education and paved the way for the higher instruction which deals with the generalizations, and establishes the proper correlation of things. True education establishes its foundation on the natural intuitions and develops these into the higher processes of thought and emotion. But the man who has slavishly committed to memory the formulae of books and thinks by rote is an ignoramus, however high-sounding his title. The pedant is at best a copyist, while the man of intuition is a real creator.

The poetic conceptions are common to all those minds that appreciate the beautiful things of the world. But some have the power to translate them into words—to link together in melodious cadences those interdependent things which the ordinary mind grasps in thought but cannot convey to others because of the inability to muster suitable symbols. All men are poets in thought; while a limited few out of each generation are poets in actual fact.

And the same thing is true in art.

The most perfect picture of a landscape is only a

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

symbol, when you think of the real landscape glistening with the morning dew, and vibrating with life at every tangent. There are many who have the aesthetic instinct, and feel the full emotion of such things. But a few out of the multitude receive the impression with such power that they can reproduce morphology and color with measurable exactness. And these we call artists.

For poetry existed before time was, and landscapes were beautiful as ever in the ancient unknown aeons when the footprint of man had never been upon this earth. I know the rainbow with all its glory was here, and the blue dome was covered betimes with fleecy clouds, and the cooling showers of summer bathed the face of nature while yet the only tenants of the earth were animals of an inferior sort. For side by side with their bones, preserved as fossils in the rocks, we find the unmistakable imprint of raindrops, which fell upon the sands of the seashore, and became covered with the silt from the water to preserve their record for all time.

We need the poet and the artist, not so much to aid us in the present interpretation and appreciation of the harmonies of nature, but to preserve these things that they may be handed down to generations yet unborn, that their accumulated store may become

## GREATER SATISFACTION

the heirloom of the ages, the crystallized sentiment of the world, the collected emotions of all who have thrilled and borne record of the thing that stirred them.

Our friend Samuel was just one of those unpretending simple souls who opened his heart to the truth and by instinct translated it into terms of his life. He knew the flowers that bloomed upon a hundred hills over which he daily drove his master's flocks, he knew the song of every bird which carolled from the woodland, he was a friend to the wild hare and the squirrel, and the multitude of small creatures that swarm in the valleys and upon the hills. Though he could not give them their proper zoological name, he knew the method of their life and his soul went out in sympathy to them.

But the magnitude of his soul was best seen in the family circle, where he did the work of a ministering angel.

With the mature judgment of a man of experience he reasoned with his mother about ways and means, and with all the solicitude of the father of a family he made plans for the education and training of the younger brothers and sisters. He was scrupulously honest and kept the family credit above reproach, though sometimes hunger and privation

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

made inroads upon them. He was generous and hospitable, though he could ill afford to bestow his hard-earned wages for the entertainment of others.

The old saying that honesty is the best policy is wonderfully true. A name for honest dealing is a good stock in trade for any man. It has a cash value that grows as he grows in financial strength. It is an asset in the commercial world that carries its own insurance and remains in force so long as the possessor lives. The man who fails to meet his obligation when due is a worse enemy to himself than to anybody else. The man who thinks he can gain advantage by dodging his creditor is like the ostrich which, when pursued, hides its head in the thicket. Sooner or later you must satisfy every obligation you have incurred, or it will abstract from your financial potency a tenfold payment. You cannot evade the truth. You may seem to parry for a time this or that unpleasant obligation, but sooner or later you will have to confront it face to face, and often you will meet with chagrin and a fallen countenance what you might have met in the beginning with head erect and dignity uncompromised. It is better to present to everything and everybody a bold front. To meet the truth of every day without trying to evade it, to feel the dignity that abides in every soul

## GREATER SATISFACTION

which has shaken off the groveling things of the world and arisen to that stratum of thought where truth and purity are the natural elements that surround us—this is the only condition of life that is worth while.

The countless millions who walk the way of carnal gratification have never tasted what real life is. They go forth to play with the baubles of the world as the child finds amusement in his gew gaws, and when the day is ended and the reverie of eventide comes, the soul recoils upon itself, and feels all the remorse that must follow the contemplation of lost opportunity. Wilfully to cut off from our life its sources of mental and spiritual replenishment, to sever ourselves from that natural inflow of the inspiration that is the birthright of us all, is to exclude from our life the only part of it that means growth and expansion toward a definite end.

When Satan took Christ to the high mountain and showed him all the glory of the world and said, "This will I give thee if thou wilt bow down and worship me," he spoke a truth that is common in life. Always there is before us the two pathways, the carnal and the spiritual, the one of ephemeral delights and the other of that greater satisfaction which contemplates not only the present hour, but takes in the



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

whole scope of our mental activities here and hereafter. Each individual interprets the world from one of these viewpoints. If the landscape has a message of spirituality for me, then in its wonderful composition I see the handiwork of an all-wise Creator, and through Him a purpose in my present relationships. But if I look at it only with the carnal eye, it means that my relationship is accidental, and that I shall wither and vanish from the earth, and be known no more in the midst of these delights, which must now minister to the aesthetic tastes of others who are aliens and strangers to me.

But I am forgetting that I am describing the life of an actual person, whose experiences brought up in my mind all these thoughts.

Into the little family circle which was defended by this brave boy, there came a day of great disquietude and worry. The shadowing wings of the angel of death hovered over them, and seemed to mark as its victim him who was the protector and guardian of all the rest. For days and days together he suffered excruciating pain, and hung in the balance between life and death. But always the same serenity of spirit was with him, and always the same smile of resignation beamed from his manly countenance. The family was overwhelmed



## GREATER SATISFACTION

with the impending calamity, and stood helpless and dumb in the face of their grief. But friends rallied from every quarter, and his sickness was the affair of the whole village. Willing hands were ready for every service possible, and no sacrifice was too great for the meanest of his friends and neighbors to make.

The denizens of cities can have no idea of that fraternal bond which brings people of the smaller communities to a unit in a common cause of mutual aid; that makes the home of affliction the rallying ground for whole towns and whole districts, regardless of age or sex or social distinction. The pure democracy of fraternalism is known only to the country town. The city has only the aristocratic form of it; and this is so much modified by interests and counter interests, by social and commercial distinctions, that it loses most of its identity as a cohesive social force. In my experience as physician I have many times witnessed that beautiful abandon of all self-interest in the cause of others which is characteristic of the rural districts, and to me it is the nearest approach to the Christ-life of anything I have ever known.

In the precincts of this meagre home the spirit of fraternalism suffused itself. Unselfish hands

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

ministered hourly to the comforts of the suffering boy. Day after day brought no change for a long time. The little assurance that came with the morning light was dispelled with the shades of the evening, and the darkness of each night accentuated all the forebodings that kindred and friends were wont to indulge in.

Just why the temperature and pulse and all the symptoms of a patient should become so much less favorable in the evening than in the morning has always been an unsolved problem with the medical fraternity. Aurora, the goddess of the morning, seems to have healing in her wings as she rises from the eastern horizon to initiate the activities of a newborn day. But the sombre shades of the night are depressing to the spirits, and except as they are utilized for slumber, bring doubt and discouragement to the mind. I believe that much of the change in the physical condition of persons in bodily affliction is due to the psychological effects of light and darkness upon them.

When we see our friends languishing in beds of affliction we are wont to ask ourselves, Why should there be suffering in the world? why could not the Creator who had all things at his disposal have ruled out sickness and poverty and vice and all

## GREATER SATISFACTION

those things that bring down the soul of man in humiliation and distress? But for these things this earth would be a paradise, and every day a day of jubilee to every soul that has received the privilege of life. And man instead of a fallen being, groveling in the dust of the earth, sinking in his degeneracy to a level beneath the brute creation would be crowned with honor and dignity and majesty.

Why does the utopian dream of the millennium have to be postponed in our minds until another hypothetical stage of our being shall arise from the portals of death to behold a world recreated, when we have all the elements of it here with us now? And why does the hand of the destroyer strike, without mercy, without remorse, without the semblance of justice at the widow's son, at the mother of helpless children, at the brilliant star in the family constellation? To all appearances it does seem that the destiny of individuals, in this world, as also the destiny of nations, is left to the caprice of blind, unreasoning force which knows neither mercy nor justice nor remorse. Human conceptions of right and wrong seem to have no place in the great world process.

The stupendous mundane machine seems to put men and women through its compartments with as

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

little concern as any other machine deals with inanimate commodities. If by chance an individual falls into the gearing and gets ground to powder, it is a matter of absolute indifference to the machine. Kindred and friends may weep, but the cosmic process deals neither in tears nor smiles. Its grim visage is unmoved by any passion, its inexorable routine unabated by any mischance.

Is there any meaning in this apparent neglect on the part of nature of the interests of its most vital elements?

I shall answer this pertinent question by relating an old legend, which comes down to us from the Dark Ages a reflex of mediæval mental processes, which we can disregard as a story, but which has in it a truth most vital in its application.

Once upon a time an angel came down from heaven to sojourn with a hermit. The two went forth on a journey together, depending for their sustenance on the charity of the people they should meet. At the close of the first day they were entertained by a stranger, who took them to his home, spread before them a sumptuous repast, and lavished upon them every attention his household could furnish. The lord of the house was particularly en-

## GREATER SATISFACTION

thusiastic in his eulogy of a certain goblet of great beauty which had been presented to him by an eminent man and which he prized above all other things in his possession. After the dinner was served the two guests were conducted to a sleeping apartment and lay down for the night.

When everything was quiet they rose. The angel seized the beautiful goblet and, concealing it under his robe, they made their way off stealthily and betook themselves again to the country road.

The next night they were entertained in the city by another wealthy man, who vied with his predecessor in bestowing hospitality upon them.

Into this household there had been born recently a son, who was the apple of their eye because he came to a childless home and was the last hope of the family lineage. When all retired to slumber, the two guests rose again, and the angel felt his way through the room to the cradle and strangled the child to death. Then they went out into the darkness and made their escape.

The just mind of the hermit rose in rebellion at such apparent injustice. With difficulty he restrained himself from complaining aloud, but he said, "It is an angel of God, and surely the ways of the Lord must be right." So he bided his time

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

and journeyed onward with his celestial companion.

As they were crossing the river on a narrow bridge a stranger met them in the middle of the stream, whom the angel accosted and of whom he inquired the way. The man turned to point out the direction of the road, and the angel pushed him into the water, and he was drowned.

With much difficulty the hermit restrained himself from complaining, for his companion seemed to delight in base ingratitude, and did things which outraged humanity and violated every law of justice and propriety. But he said, "It is an angel of God, and surely there must be righteousness in his actions."

Then they journeyed into a drear wilderness. Darkness came on, and the bleak wind bore in upon them, and they were in much distress. In the distance they saw a light toward which they made their way in the hope that they would find entertainment. But the man of the house was gruff and uncouth and treated them very harshly. He sent them into his pig sty to sleep and refused to give them even a crust of bread to satisfy their hunger.

In the morning when they came forth from their miserable bed chamber, the angel accosted their host and thanked him most kindly for the entertainment

## GREATER SATISFACTION

and presented him with the golden goblet which he had purloined from their first friend. The indignation of the hermit knew no bounds, and he railed on his companion vehemently. "Every person," he said, "who has treated us kindly you have rewarded with base injustice and horrible cruelty, and the only one who has been harsh and brutal you outdid yourself to fawn upon and presented him with a princely reward. This is contrary to every principle of justice and humanity, and must be wrong even though an angel from the throne of grace stands voucher for it."

Then the angel chided his friend. "You are passing the judgment that mankind in general passes without full knowledge of the thing you are judging. Listen to me and I shall explain in simple terms the paradoxes which have caused you such disquietude. Then you will perceive that the judgments of God are righteous though they may seem an absolute contradiction to the judgments of finite minds.

"The man from whom we took the golden goblet had been temperate in all his ways, and had passed the crisis of his life in safety, but this beautiful gift of a valued friend was such an important object to him that he filled and refilled it with wine, and was



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

on the high way to become a drunkard. By taking this temptation out of his life we stopped the downward process that had him in its tow, and sent him forth to reassert the majesty of manhood undebased by vicious habits.

"The man who was parent to the child we destroyed had been noted for his charity. He had given of his goods without stint to the poor and the needy, and all men blessed him for his broad humanity and his kindness to all who were unfortunate. But when this son came into the home that had been childless, the desire to bestow upon him all the advantages that were fitting to the heir of a great household and a landed estate, became the absorbing passion of his life. All his humane ideas were narrowed down to this one individual, and his soul began to shrivel up. By removing from his life this one great impediment we opened once again the floodgates of his soul, and permitted the inflow of that great tide of humanity, without which his life would have shrunk to a vanishing point and disappeared from the active world.

"The man whom we pushed from the bridge was just nearing the climax of a plot which would have reddened his hands with the blood of his fellow-man and blighted soul and body alike. By thus de-



## GREATER SATISFACTION

priving him of his own life, we rescued his name from the ignominy of a murderer, and his soul from a crime that could not be forgiven in this world nor in the world to come. The man who lived in the wilderness was one of those unfortunate individuals who become pessimistic and array themselves against society, and swear vengeance against all men. He had known humanity only from the side of selfishness and injustice, and he could not understand that men could act from motives that look to the benefit of others. And our showing him an example of magnanimity will arouse the latent humane instinct that lies slumbering in every breast and send him forth with a new resolve to cultivate unselfishness and bestow benefits upon others. Society itself is responsible for much of the sordid selfishness of its individual units. Every day we meet those unfortunate victims of injustice and cruelty who have lost all faith in their fellow men and who have reverted to the old law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But when by chance they discover that there are people in the world who can act from high humanitarian motives, they have a new birth, and begin to walk in newness of life. If we appeal to the God in people it will respond to us, but if we appeal to the baser

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

impulses of their life we will get response in kind."

So the apparent injustice of the angel was justified and the hermit perceived that his judgment was based upon half knowledge. And so we all sit in judgment upon the decrees of Deity and try to resolve with finite minds what the Infinite mind has planned, and we do not understand that our outlook on the case comprehends only one tangent while the eye of God takes in the whole circumference.

The chastening hand of sickness and adversity comes to us for a purpose, though we do not grasp its meaning.

"All nature is but art, unknown to thee;  
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood,  
All partial evil, universal good."

The royal metal of character is refined only in the crucible of affliction. The easy, pleasurable way of life is the way that limits our development. Wealth and ease and luxury are conspirators against the soul. In the last analysis they are most cruel things. "God takes out of a man's soul what he puts into his coffers."

Into this lowly home we are describing sickness and the shadowing of the wings of the destroying

## GREATER SATISFACTION

angel had come for a purpose. But it is hard for us to see and comprehend the meaning of it when it is the widow's son that is stricken. Much less easy was it for those who depended on his daily toil for the necessities of life. It seemed that God had forsaken them. In vain they prayed for mercy, but the relentless grip of the destroyer abated not for a moment. Day by day the suffering boy grew weaker, and the faith of his kindred and friends grew less. But the resolution of his soul was undiminished, and the clear light of his eye flickered not for one instant. A smile of appreciation greeted every little attention that was bestowed upon him, and never a cross or harsh word escaped his lips, though his suffering at times was excruciating. "I am not afraid to die," he was heard to say, "but I do desire so much to live for the sake of my mother and my brothers and sisters." Through all these dreary hours of pain and distress he was making plans for the future, and never dreaming of anything but the happy consummation of them in a few days, when this tide of sorrow should have expended its force and recede.

One glorious morning dawned on this home of affliction, and for a time their hopes went skyward in the change it seemed to bring. It was the early

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

spring time. The song of birds was in the air, the sweet perfume of flowers was carried by every breeze, and the sun poured over the eastern hills a flood of golden light. And our patient little Samuel seemed to partake of the spirit of the hour, and his soul thrilled with the glory of that morning carnival. As the anxious group of relatives and friends sat in silence around the humble cot, his eye beamed with a splendor unwonted, and he said:

"This is such a beautiful world we live in, and you people have been so much like ministering angels. I cannot imagine paradise in any better setting than this. I do so wish to live, but if it's God's will that I should go hence, I have no fear. My conscience is void of offense. I shall only regret the parting, which will be but for a time. I do not guess, but I know that we shall meet again upon that other shore. God has removed all doubt from my mind. The veil is rent, and I can see clearly the transformation from the world of material things to the world of spirit. The peace that is in my soul transcends all words. I do not suffer now. A spirit has come over me that dispels all fear and pain."

The morning hour passed away with our young friend in this state of mind. He was not sure, but he

## GREATER SATISFACTION

thought the hour of his departure was near at hand.

Our mother Nature which seems to know no pity in her dealings with the children of men is yet more merciful than we are wont to believe. She sends her well adjusted dose of carbonic acid gas whirling through our veins to smother the pains of dissolution that otherwise would be so terrible. She deals in mental states that come as the antidote of fear and worry. She sends streamers of spiritual light as emissions from beacons upon the golden shore to guide our feet over the dark river. Many times, as physician, have I beheld this dawn of the spirit in the gathering gloom of the death chamber. It is not, in my interpretation, the accentuated twilight of the passing day; it is not the manifestation of mental processes set in motion by the poisoning of brain cells as some have maintained, but it is the opening up of a new mental condition, the outlook upon the universe from the spiritual viewpoint.

I look into the cold face of science in vain for a parallel consolation. To say that this is an ecstatic mental state resulting from irritated brain cells is an easy way to dispose of it, but when we demand the proof of such an assumption, science has nothing to offer. The relationship of certain mental states to certain conditions of the brain and of the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

circulating blood has a basis of plausibility in the delirium of fever, in the dethroned judgment of alcoholism and other drug poisonings, in the mental hebetude of uremia. But it is pure presumption to conclude from this that all unusual mental processes have a like explanation. This is in the main a matter of conjecture and not a matter of proof. Science as such deals with the physical and ignores completely the spiritual. What she can not demonstrate with microscope, with crucible or chemical reagents, she rules out of existence. But why, I ask, should men of the scientific outlook be so anxious to gainsay the spiritual counterpart of this physical existence? Is not the phenomenon of life more easily explained with the assumption of an indwelling spirit? It certainly changes the whole meaning of life when we regard it as a perpetual thing, and not as an accidental combination of certain elements and certain forces.

I have sat by many a death bed and watched the ebbing tide of life. The vital processes, though modified and retarded, continue uninterrupted until a great climacteric act of the respiration brings all the life phenomena at once to a dramatic ending. The demand for oxygen, which is so immanent and constant, grows yet more pressing as the respiratory

## GREATER SATISFACTION

center gives up the struggle, and then, as if in one great effort to regain itself, the rhythm becomes lengthened, all the voluntary and involuntary muscles are called into action, and two or three times the lungs are filled to their limit. Then suddenly all manifestations of life cease, and the process of disintegration of tissue rapidly sets in.

Now, I ask my material friends what is it that has happened? Here is the machine equipped with all its wonderful physiological apparatus; the eye with its crystalline lens, the heart with its perfect hydraulic construction, the muscles all connected up by telegraphic lines with the conscious centers above, ready to respond to the minutest bidding of the will; the brain, that wonderful dynamic, which is ready to put out not only orders for physical action, but to generate poetry, music, oratory, art. But the power that controlled all these activities has abdicated. Something has gone, which, but a moment ago, gave forth its will, and maintained itself an individual unit in the great panorama of life.

As I write these lines I see from my window an electric car standing idle on the track. It has in its make up all the machinery of locomotion, and could move through space at a great rate of speed. But it stands motionless. Presently I see the trolley



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

released and permitted to make contact with a wire above. Then suddenly all the machinery that has been motionless begins to stir, and the vehicle fulfills the purpose of its creation by carrying passengers many miles through the city.

And I am persuaded that there is a direct analogy between the electric machine and the human body. These wonderfully organized cells are potentialities, but not physiological factors, unless some extraneous force takes hold of them, and that extraneous force manifests volition, intelligence, emotion.

The harp has all the elements in its construction for the production of harmonious musical combinations of sound. But if there be not a harpist to play upon it, it will be silent forever. Of its own accord it cannot produce music. But when the skilled finger of a musician sweeps over its strings, they vibrate with melody and harmony sublime.

They who have said that the brain cells secrete thought as the liver cells secrete bile have not given serious consideration to the indwelling intelligent force that directs mental activity, and that manifests itself most certainly when it makes its tragic exit.

Biochemistry, I admit, is a vital physiological factor, and is indispensable to the life of each in-



## GREATER SATISFACTION

dividual cell as it is the aggregate of cells that go to make up the body. But biochemistry is only an abstract thing if there be not the indwelling life principle to direct and appropriate its occult processes. And this life principle, call it spirit or what you will, is the extraneous thing that comes into the human machine and starts its functions and directs its processes to a purposeful end. Biochemistry is an indispensable part of the life process, but it is not life itself, any more than is the oxidation of tissues, the assimilation of food, or any other chemical or physiological process. He who ignores the spiritual corollary to this physical organism is driven to a lamentable pass to explain things that are very simple to the mind that admits the indwelling spirit. The materialist is a credulous individual. He is fanatical to a theory, and will hold himself to many absurdities to brace up his preconceived idea of things. When we come down to the last analysis of things there is no difference between the man of fanatical preconceived ideas of science, with a determination to bend everything to fit in with his theory and the man of fanatical religious views who is willing to go to the same extremity to maintain his position. The fact that one labels his fanaticism "science" and the other

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

"religion" makes no difference in actual principle. These two kinds of men are of the same breed. The great defect in their lives is their unwillingness to follow the truth. They are the men who have retarded the progress of the world in all ages by their intolerance. They are the men who have made thumbscrews in the days of intellectual thrall-dom and lighted fires to burn heretics.

The passing of one so near to the heart of the village was naturally an event of greatest concern to every one. Eager faces were watching for every token, and interrogating every neighbor about the events of the sick room. The whole village was keyed up to the highest pitch of expectancy, and moved with a common impulse of solicitude.

The long slanting shadows of the evening were falling eastward, and the rays of the departing sun were streaming through the windows of that room of affliction, when a sudden change came over the countenance of the dying boy. He had been dull and apathetic for some considerable time. Nature was instilling into his blood her accumulating doses of carbonic acid and gas to benumb the sensitive nerves and quiet the fears of dissolution. But consciousness, which had ebbed and flowed, but which was now far out to sea, seemed to return with

## GREATER SATISFACTION

a sudden surge and his face lighted up with a glory sublime. It was the last full flow of the tide of life before its final recession, and in its effulgence every faculty seemed to be keyed up to its highest tension. There was majesty in that countenance as he surveyed the group of kindred and friends around him, and beckoned for each in turn to come and grasp his hand.

"I know that I must go," he said in tones of sadness. "I know that I must sleep in the grave, but we shall meet again sometime, somewhere. Goodbye. God bless you all. I am completely happy. I move out of the dark valley into the light, and my pathway is clear before me."

A fixity came over his countenance, and the glory of that passing moment wrought itself into his physical being, and the majesty of life became the majesty of death.

I am free to admit that these spiritual premonitions are not the customary thing when people come to the last great struggle. Most of us will fall asleep only when our strength is all exhausted in the fight for life, and have no idea that the hour of our departure has arrived. Comparatively few people know that they are really dying, when the outgoing tide lifts them over the bar. Some aged

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

people I have known who were really weary of the struggle and glad to get out of it; and some unfortunates who had suffered so long that they welcomed anything that would eliminate the pain from their sensitive nerves. But the average man fights to the last ditch, and never surrenders.

Once in a while, particularly in precocious youth, we meet with that spiritual temperament which seems to have prescience of the world that is to come, and which plunges into the great mystery with all the confidence that perfect knowledge of its meaning could give. Some might explain this as a simple psychological condition, which it really is, but to my mind it is not born of engendered poisons from within, but of the great all comprehending spirit from without, which sees things in their true relationship and manifests its perfect knowledge through these sensitive instruments. These transparent souls are *en rapport* with those finer spiritual emanations to which the ordinary individual is quite unresponsive. And now we will let the curtain fall upon the sad ending of this beautiful life, and leave him, we hope, to rest in peace, and to live in the memory of all who knew him and appreciated his worth and gained admonition from his poetic ending.

## CHAPTER VII

### A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED

THE special venire knows no limitation in the space it embraces. I go far afield and summon now a witness who has drifted far away from the old mooring. For convenience we will call him Richard, and we shall ask him to take the stand, and give forth the evidence he has in his possession. We shall swear him in to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The family circle to which Richard belonged was one of those rolling circles which moves from place to place and sees opportunity only in the distance. His father belonged to a type of men we are all familiar with, who see their chances of success always in some other locality than that which they now occupy. They are often like the dog which dropped its piece of meat to grab at the shadow. They enter with much enthusiasm into each new venture as though it were the one opportunity of their life, but the momentum soon begins to slacken, and presently comes to a standstill.

So much effort is expended to no purpose by fail-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

ing to follow up the advantage it brings that they always fall short of success. Next thing to work, the most important of all factors in the life of men who succeed, is pertinacity. You have to put yourself down like an axis of the earth and stick, if you ever intend to accomplish anything. The fitful man is as incompetent as the lazy man. Intermittent effort accomplishes little more than no effort at all.

After many ventures in various localities this family did finally settle down to something like permanence in one of the larger towns of their native state. They acquired some land holdings and built a home in an outlying part of the town. The older members of the family found occasional employment in the various activities of the community, and otherwise assisted the father in tilling the little plat of ground they had purchased. Some degree of comfort and respectability seemed finally to have fallen to their lot.

Our friend Richard was one of the younger members of the family. He attended the public school, and was known as a good student, though there was no indication at that time of anything out of the ordinary in his mental make-up.

There was a little girl of the town whom for convenience we shall call Mary as we detail some of her

## THE REJECTED STONE

life's experiences. She was the friend and boon companion of Richard. As children they played together, as students they worked together, and in all the social activities of the junior element of the community they seemed to gravitate toward each other. As they grew into their 'teens, and began to feel the hidden motion of the soul which stirs within every manly and womanly breast with the transition from childhood into adolescence, the attachment grew stronger. No word had been spoken. Indeed, they seemed to take each other for granted. No avowal could add to the compact which nature had arranged between them. From the first they seemed to understand each other perfectly.

Richard had grown in favor among the people of the town. He manifested a degree of intellect and a magnanimity of soul which were quite unusual among the boys of his age and station. His elder brothers, and even the father, began to be jealous of the prestige he had attained. The halo which gathered around his life seemed to them to be a reflection upon the dim background of the family setting.

Woe be to the one who ever dares to raise his head above the common level of his fellows. The greatest of all the offenses we can commit against



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

our associates is to outstrip them in the struggle for preferment. All other offenses may be forgiven, but this is the sin unpardonable.

Richard was employed in a large mercantile establishment of the town. His employers placed every confidence in him, and made him the custodian of their safe with all its contained treasure. He was rapidly becoming the dominant factor of the firm, although he was still only in his 'teens. His was indeed a career of much promise for the future, judged by all external and internal conditions.

How little we know of the mischances that lurk in the way of budding, developing careers, in a moment's time reversing the whole course of events and bringing discredit to the one who seemed worthy of all confidence.

One morning when the safe was opened it was found that a considerable sum of money was missing. Suspicion knows but little discrimination of probabilities or possibilities when it is directed against one who has excited envy among his fellows. When people wish the thing to be true which they suspect, everything is colored to fit in with their explanation.

And indeed the facts did seem to point toward our friend Richard as the one who must know something about the theft, for he was sole custodian of the



## THE REJECTED STONE

combination of the safe. But he stoutly protested his innocence, although he had no explanation to make.

And now developed one of those crises in the life of this boy which sometimes in a greater or less degree must come to every individual. To see our friends aligning themselves either for or against us in the face of some great dramatic episode in our affairs; to see those whose fidelity we have banked upon jumping headlong at the conclusion that we have gone wrong, and that it is their duty to draw the deadline of social ostracism against us,—these are the experiences which reveal to us the appalling instability of human character. Not infrequently the people who take the most pronounced stand against us are the very ones who have most willingly accepted favors at our hands. They have eaten of the substance we bestowed and then turned to rend us.

Our Richard found himself facing a grave situation. He was placed under arrest and put through the terrible ordeal of an investigation of his supposed guilt. The friends of former days, every one, deserted without giving him the benefit of a doubt. His father and his brothers were among the first to denounce him. Even the little Mary was carried

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

away in the popular clamor and listed herself with those who were against him. In all the community there was only one voice raised in his defense, and that was the voice of his mother.

Among the most beautiful of all human relationships is that between mother and son. All other bonds are variable and liable at any time to be sundered, but the loyalty of a mother's heart is the one constant, undeviating thing in human character. It knows no limitation by prosperity or adversity. The blighting spell of misfortune has no power over it. It follows afar off to the prison wall, to the gallows, to the place of crucifixion, and blots out the offense which preceded them by the multitude of its compassionate tears. The mother's devotion is measured in terms of necessity and expands itself to the full requirement of those who have a valid claim to it.

Apart from the fact that Richard was custodian of the key to the safe, there was nothing to indicate that he was the culprit. The investigation produced no evidence to warrant legal proceedings, and so he was acquitted. But the community had constituted itself a jury, and adjudged him guilty without a hearing. What was he to do, what could he do under the circumstances? He knew that he was innocent of the charge, but to convince people whose

## THE REJECTED STONE

minds are inflamed with prejudice is a hopeless task. If he were to flee, his enemies would use that as a convincing proof of his guilt; if he were to remain, all doors would be closed against him; and the vindication which comes by honest effort would be forever denied him. Besides, he would be ostracized and obliged to walk the streets of the town, where all his kindred and former friends resided, in humiliation and disgrace. The consciousness of his own innocence was a great aid to him in the decision. A soul unsullied is bold to assert its inalienable rights in the face of all kinds of aspersion. It is only the guilty coward who cringes before the clamorous multitude. And so Richard reached his conclusion by that intuition which is born of the fearlessness of honesty. He went to the officers and told them where he could be found if any question arose requiring his presence. In another more friendly clime he would work out his destiny, and when he was vindicated he would come back to show them how they had misjudged him, and how cruel their verdict had been which robbed him of his honor, the most priceless asset of any human soul.

With one fond caress for the little mother who had stood so nobly by him, he went forth into the world to fight his battles alone.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

He knew not what his vocation was to be, but he had one big, dominating thought which impelled him onward day by day, and that was that he must make good, and come back to victory where he had met with apparent defeat.

If we could analyze the lives of men who have made a big success of their calling, we would find that nearly always there is some great impelling motive back of them. Most often it is a love affair. In the great masterpieces of Raphael there is one countenance which always appears. Fornarina, the lover, wrought herself into the fabric of his dreams. In literature, the same unmistakable portraiture reveals the hidden spring which has impelled onward to the highest attainment authors who might otherwise have been unknown. The "Inferno" without Beatrice as a redeeming angel, would perhaps never have been produced. It is the dream children of our emotions and not of our imagination which attract the attention of the world. The story which is written in the life blood of the author is the one that will live.

The man who goes forth from the land of his nativity with the burning remembrance of unkindness heaped upon him by those who ought to have been his friends, has perhaps the greatest motive of

## THE REJECTED STONE

all to make good. I have no patience with the man who absents himself for years from his native town and then comes sneaking in through the back streets in the garb of a tramp. Unless I could come in with the dignity and honor of a respectable citizen I would remain away forever.

In a city far away Richard took up his abode and began life anew with one great resolve forever present in his mind.

One burning desire which dominated all other things and incorporated itself into the fabric of the air castles he was wont to build. He would fight for success, but not the success which satisfies the ordinary individual. God helping him, he would aim at nothing short of a career which would distinguish him from all his fellows.

If we start out with sufficient determination we can be almost anything we wish to be. The trouble with most people is that they have not got the courage to follow up their desires. They have wish-bone but not back-bone. Before the indomitable will of man all things must bend if the resolution to make them bend is continuous. God is always on the side of the man who believes in himself.

Whether by accident or design I know not, but Richard gravitated to an institution which made art

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

work its specialty. There does seem to be an impelling force back of the real student which acts like the magnetism of the mariner's needle, and draws him ever toward the centers of learning. I never yet saw a young man or a young woman whose soul hungered and thirsted for knowledge, but in some mysterious manner the way opened up before them, and they were permitted to gratify their desires. Providence seems to have a really watchful care over this class of people, moulding every circumstance to fit in with their impelling inclination.

Richard matriculated in the regular course and had the privilege of doing janitor's service to meet his expenses. This imposed upon him a handicap which made necessary a great amount of energy to hold his balance with the young men and young women who entered without condition. But he was a lover of all things intellectual, and he soon took his position as one of the leaders of his class. The sons and daughters of wealthy parents who came to gratify the family ambition and had no real desire to do the thing that was required of them, were soon out-distanced by this unfortunate boy who found in intellectual pursuits his native element and took to the college as the duckling takes to the stream.

I believe in an aristocracy of brains. Your social

## THE REJECTED STONE

classification which places in the highest scale people possessed of money, often dishonestly acquired or accidentally inherited, is absurd and ridiculous. The only real wealth in this world of ours is the wealth of the soul, and the only real aristocrat is the one who has intellect and character.

Richard did not shine in the smart set who found opportunity through the sororities to indulge in much social pastime.

I fear these social excrescences which have grown up like a fungus growth in our colleges are getting us away from the real issues involved in college education. I believe they are consuming time which could be devoted with profit to the really serious work which the college should require. I believe, too, that they are breeding mollicoddles of men and women who are trying to substitute tinsel for the royal metal of education. I am willing to forego all the social advantage they give in the interest of sound intellectual work. Let a man be the master of his profession, and do something worth while, and I will risk his social development. The world will teach him social forms by the homage it comes to pay to his genius, and he will not lack the refinement which society expects from the man of a degree.

Our Richard wore seedy clothes because he could



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

afford no better. He dined on humble fare and lived a secluded life, because his meager income demanded the greatest economy. But in the seclusion of his room, in the silent midnight hours, he was filled and thrilled with thoughts and emotions which can be comprehended only by those who have the genuine instinct of a student. In the dull modelers' clay he saw classic profiles rising by the magic of his touch; in the rough marble boulders from the quarry he saw sleeping angels which needed but the aid of his chisel and mallet to set them free.

For Richard was a genius. He had found through the very buffetings of fate an outlet for the pent-up energy of his soul.

He loved his work so much that such incidental things as food and sleep were indulged in grudgingly only as nature asserted herself and made demand for them. The moments of his life were as precious to him as the coins in the miser's purse, and they were counted out with the same precision.

And this is the really superlative degree of life, to find the thing by accident or design which nature intended you to do, and then to throw all the energy of your soul into the execution of it. Your easy-going son of wealthy parentage imagines he has found happiness in the social functions of the soror-



## THE REJECTED STONE

ity and the club, and does not comprehend that the real nectar of life is not to be purchased by money nor acquired by social preferment. Let the son of wealth play with his baubles, then, while the son of toil drudges and works. One day the process will be reversed, and the stone which was rejected will become the head of the corner. God has placed His angel with the flaming sword before the temple of learning and decreed that none shall enter there without giving the password of absolution from the frivolous things of the world.

Some people have said that a genius is always an abnormal person, that his peculiar bent is a form of mental aberration, that he lacks in all other departments of his mentality except in the one which manifests his peculiar power. In a future chapter of this book there is to be a discussion of the relationship of the human machine to the great all-pervading source of intelligence. The genius is the one who has the power by instinct to develop one particular part of his mental machinery to its highest possible capacity. In one direction he is almost omniscient. He seems to be born with the instinct to do a certain thing, as the duckling has the instinct to swim in the water. He speaks as one with authority.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

Considering the legacy which he leaves to the world, we can pardon his eccentricities, and his lack of knowledge of practical things, and give him leeway to develop his mental specialty to its highest possible degree. He is abnormal in the right direction. We live in an age of specialists. Life is too short for technical study of many things. If we would acquire that degree of efficiency which attracts attention we must concentrate our mental energy into a small space.

The genius is not so unmindful of the general obligations of his life as we are wont to imagine. He may be seclusive; he may be overshadowed by one impelling thought; he may forget sometimes the little social obligations in his pondering of weightier things. But he is intensely, divinely human. His emotions are developed to the superlative degree. Of his kindred and friends he is enthusiastic.

So far from manifesting any form of insanity, as some have imagined, he attacks the problems of life in the only sane way, by specializing on one thing and bringing all the power of his mentality to a focus upon that. Of course, it would not do to have a world made up of geniuses. The picture must have its background, the jewel must have its setting, the gold must have its alloy. And so society has

## THE REJECTED STONE

adjusted itself so that its purest mind-metal shall be tempered in the right proportion with material less perishable, if of less intrinsic value, that the aggregate may be a combination of stability. The alloy itself may have intrinsic value approximating the royal metal, and pass current as a very good substitute for it in times of scarcity, lacking only in the extreme lustre which distinguishes the approximate from the absolute. The man of talent develops mental power by dint of hard effort, while the man of genius is born with a great measure of it already developed, and gives it forth by intuition. The man of talent is content to work the fallow soil of fields already surveyed, while the man of genius sails boldly away from the old boundary lines, and seeks virgin continents with unknown possibilities. The man of talent revolves in an elliptical orbit which can be computed with mathematical certainty, while the man of genius goes off on a hyperbolic curve, the direction of which no man has computed.

The members of the faculty were not slow to discover the splendid work which was accomplished by this unpretending boy, nor the latent possibilities which were held in reserve in his peculiar mentality. Opportunities were placed in his way to ease the struggle for existence which had borne in so un-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

mercifully upon his valuable time at the beginning, and he was enabled to make an appearance which he was not ashamed of. He gathered momentum with the fleeting months, and when the day of graduation came he was rated not only as the leader of his class, but as one of the brightest intellects which had figured in the annals of that institution for many years. A scholarship was awarded him without much question as to competitors, which, with the aid of a wealthy art patron, who had become interested in his promising career, enabled him to go abroad, and pursue his studies in Paris. At this mecca of American students he soon gained favor, and the boldness and originality of his ideas, as expressed in modelling clay and marble, attracted much attention. He came home loaded with honors to receive the congratulations of his former faculty and to take up his abode in the environs of the college which had given him his start. His fame soon spread far and wide, and his studio became the center of a wealthy patronage which poured its treasure into his coffers, and swelled his bank deposit beyond his fondest dreams.

So much success would have unbalanced the mentality of the average youth, but Richard was a prince by nature, and nothing could disturb the equanimity

## THE REJECTED STONE

of a mind which dwelt in the lofty heights above the ordinary human frailties. He remained as simple as a child in the midst of adulation which would have been overwhelming to most persons. And this is the test of a really great soul. The man who maintains the simplicity of his life, and greets all his friends with the same cordiality after he has received the homage of the world, and established himself on a financial basis among the opulent, is the man who can lay claim to greatness.

But too often we see the reverse of this. The boy who goes away and gets the polish of high school or college, comes back to disdain the poor old father and mother who have sacrificed everything to make possible his education; and the friends of bygone years, who are still living the simple life he was born and bred in are looked upon as bores unworthy of his attention. The meanness of such a method never seems to dawn upon the mind of the one who is really guilty of it.

In the midst of all his prosperity there was one thought which dominated the mind of our young friend. He had been disavowed by his kindred and the associates of the bygone years. He would go back to them, and show them how they had misjudged him. He would not be revengeful nor un-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

kind, he was too big a man to entertain any motive of that kind. He would go with the spirit of love and forgiveness in his heart to grasp them by the hand and return good for evil.

In the score of years which had sped away since his exile many changes had come to the community whence he came. The relentless hand of time knows neither fear nor favor in its dealings with communities. Human hearts are but a commodity to be handled by it with indifference. Tears and pleadings are of no avail. The mundane machine grinds all things to powder, regardless of intrinsic value. Sham and pretense, pride and folly, wealth and poverty, the just and the unjust must all go through the mill and receive the same treatment. Character is the only thing which it will not and can not grind. And the most interesting thing in life is to look back at the sweep of the years, and recapitulate the drama which we saw at its beginning, to turn the kaleidoscope round by decades and see the new adjustment.

And this was the thought which came to Richard as he wandered back to the old home. His brothers had proved to be incompetent men when they met with the stern realities of life. The old farm and the roof which had sheltered him were under mortgage, and the bank which held the note was pressing

## THE REJECTED STONE

for a settlement. His aged parents were driven to desperation. Their piteous pleadings were all to no purpose, for banking houses are of necessity deaf to all appeals for mercy. Theirs is the cold blooded letter of the law. They never temper justice with mercy. They act out the old dictum of the Scripture, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." They demand the uttermost farthing, though hearts may break and lives be wrecked in the rendering of it. And yet they are a necessary part of our social and financial system, and we could not get along without them.

Just as the affairs of this family had reached their climax of misfortune and the order was momentarily expected which would turn them all out as vagabonds in the street, Richard, the long lost Richard, came unannounced and unexpected, as though Providence had sent him to be the deliverer of his people. They were filled with amazement at the sight of him and stood in fear of his august presence. But his kindly, benevolent bearing soon inspired confidence, and put them at ease. The amount of the mortgage was but an insignificant thing to him, whose reserve under judicious management had grown to large proportions. He discharged the obligation with as much unconcern as a contractor pays off one of his



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

laborers on Saturday night, and handed them their reprieve with the air of a princely giver. He thanked God that the hour had come when he could return good for evil.

The father and the brothers who had been so loud in their denunciation, were glad now to receive benefits from the one whom they had driven away in dishonor, and who bestowed them with a magnanimity that bore no indication of the emotions which were playing within his heart. For the hour when we can render service to those who have treated us unkindly is the hour of our greatest victory. The poor old mother whose loyalty had never been shaken looked upon her honored son with that pride and satisfaction which only one who is kindred in thought and emotion can feel. To her it was the hour of the greatest satisfaction of her life.

Poor little Mary had become very insignificant in the affairs of the community. Long before this she had laid by the tinsel and the fine gowns which added to the attractiveness of her young womanhood, and allowed herself to become seedy and disheveled and insipid. She had gone entirely out of the public thought, and her name would never have been linked with that of Richard save for the memories of their early infatuation.



## THE REJECTED STONE

She had married at an early date a young man of the town, who was reputed to be handsome but who had no other qualification than his good looks to fit him for the responsibilities of life.

Our good mother Nature is perhaps more just than we comprehend in her allotments to her children of the good things of the world. She compensates for deficiencies and puts limitations on excesses in her subtle manner, and when we size it all up, there is not so much difference after all in the aggregate of advantages that fall to the lot of each of us. Your one-talent man has a one-talent responsibility, your ten-talent man has a ten-talent responsibility, and the amount of satisfaction that each gets out of life is dependent not so much upon the magnitude of his undertaking as it is upon the completeness with which he discharges all duties involved.

He who occupies the whole of his circle will be happy, though it is of limited circumference, while he who attempts to circumscribe the earth and fails to realize his purpose, will die in disappointment.

Happiness, then, comes from being the master of the situation which fate has allotted to us, be it great or small.

And this young man, nameless to us, who had captivated our little winsome friend, settled down to

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

the vocation of a delivery man, with a salary so limited that the meager home he established for the wife and the children who followed after was destitute of everything but the bare necessities of life. He adopted the garb of a vagabond himself, partly from necessity and partly from an inborn lack of refinement, which asserted itself in every phase of his life. Compare these two men, the one the rejected suitor of twenty years ago, who went out under a cloud but who had come back crowned with every honor, possessed of every advantage which wealth and social prestige can give; and the other subtending the little circle of a man who delivers onions and slices of bacon at the back door of the patrons of his firm. Well, I suppose there is some satisfaction in being a handsome delivery man, but the admiration invoked is not of the kind which replenishes the larder or wardrobe of a family whose daily requirements are but insufficiently supplied.

The mistake this young lady made would have an element of the ludicrous in it if it were not so terribly tragic. Turning back the dial hand of time twenty years, we see her standing at the parting of the ways. Two roads are before her. One is to lead over a stony, barren wilderness, unproductive and uninviting; the other is to lead through vales of beauty and

## THE REJECTED STONE

over mountains of grandeur, where every comfort and every luxury can be had for the asking. She did not stop to think; she just made one of those mad, impulsive decisions which people sometimes make, and the die was cast which fixed her social standing for all time. What must she have thought when she looked into the countenance of this august man with the world at his feet and compared him with the slinking coward in the vagabond's garb who must by force of circumstances be her lord and master for all time. It is the sad old story of Maud Muller, which never fails to repeat itself and leave its wreck of humanity upon the shoals of time to burn out their life-wick in vain regrets for what might have been.

Long before, the last vestige of suspicion had been lifted from the name of our friend by the confession of the real culprit, who was paying for the penalty of many crimes behind prison bars. How wonderfully true to the best interests of life is that old Scriptural injunction. "Judge not that ye be not judged."

When all the leading people of the community came to pay their respects to the one whom they had cast out in dishonor, but who had returned to reflect upon their town an illumination which was alto-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

gether beyond their comprehension, he felt that he had reached the real climax of his life.

And here we will let the curtain drop, until we see him in perspective once again in the summary which brings together all the threads of narrative of my theme and merges this grand character into the group whose varied experience I trust has rounded out and amplified some of the real philosophy of life.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

I AM going to summon now a witness whose life is intimately familiar to me. He shall be the last. His testimony is to supplement the rest, and will go more into detail. With it I am going to submit my case.

I hope the indulgent reader will catch the drift of my purpose and judge charitably of the way the evidence is presented. My life's work is not to write books. By far the greater part of my time and attention is demanded in other directions. But through a varied experience of successes and failures I have arrived at some very definite ideas as to life's duties and obligations. I have known the vindictive hate of some people; I have enjoyed the love and respect, I trust, of very many more.

At the age of forty-six I should have learned something of the philosophy of life if I ever am to learn it. Indeed, it may be a pardonable bit of egotism to boast myself a bit of a philosopher.

Not that I have penetrated very far into the occult things of life. Not that I have found positive proof

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of any theory of my mundane relationships or exploited any hypothesis of the great problems of the universe. In these things I indulge my guess as other people have a right to indulge theirs. But rather that I have arrived at the situation where I am willing to announce my life open for all truth. It takes a long, long time for the average individual to gain mastery of his mental machinery to the extent that will enable him to make in candor this announcement. It is so hard to get away from traditional methods in our thought. We have been so fearful of trusting our mental processes without the limitations that empiricism has held about them. We have trembled on the threshold of the temple of freedom, and feared that within its precincts God was not to be found.

I believe that God is everywhere. I open my castle wall to the four winds of heaven, and invite in everything from the ends of the earth, which comes in the name of truth. I am trying in my feeble way to show my faith in the truth that comes to me, not by giving it a mere mental assent, but by incorporating it into my life, that I may walk by its light and have my footsteps guided by its admonition. Many times the light is dim, and I find myself groping in the gloaming. Many times, like you, my gentle

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

reader, I lose my way and have to come back to the point of departure to find the trail again. But the more I try, the more easy my task becomes, and I live in the hope that the future may have in store for me a more perfect illumination of my pathway, so that I shall not be in danger of stumbling and falling. Sometimes, like you, I have periods of mental exaltation, in which life's duties all come out in bold relief. And these moments, these hours of inspiration, are the ecstatic periods which make all the rest of life tolerable. But for the occasional influx of this supermundane intelligence, we would be but animals acting out animal instincts. As the sunshine so reveals the contour of the valley that we can remember to walk through it, safely, even after the darkness has come, so an hour of inspiration carries us safely over days of dullness, when the spiritual part of us acts only automatically, and our mental processes follow only the old beaten track.

This illumination that comes from above, men have tried to imitate by stimulating the brain cells with alcohol, morphine, cocaine and other poisons. But the folly of such spurious inspiration is soon manifest by the havoc that follows in its wake. The mental nightmare that succeeds the day of exalta-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

tion is but an indication of the physical damage that has been done, and it only requires repetition to bring about complete mental and moral disintegration. But I am philosophising myself, when I intended to put my philosophy into the lives of others.

For the last of this group of children who played the game of chance with the daisy's petals I choose another Bible name. We will let him bear the appellation of David, memorable from the days of Israel's shepherd king.

Not that there is anything in being named after kings or rulers. For often the achievements of people in the humbler walks of life are quite as great in kind if not in degree as the deeds of the men who beat down armies and lift up thrones. And this same David knew something of the way of conquest on a modest scale, as the pages of his little book will show. He met with difficulties that seemed insurmountable, but each in turn was conjured away by the magic spell of will. He made plans that seemed to his kindred and friends impossible of realization, but to their amazement, things seemed to adjust themselves in line without an effort, and the impossible came to pass.

David was born in a little village. He worked on his father's farm from the earliest years he can re-



## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

member. His father was one of those strenuous workers who never tire themselves, and who cannot comprehend that other people on account of their tender years or physical incapacity might tire. Many times the little hapless boy found himself astride of a horse miles from his home going to the wheat field to irrigate long before the break of day, and he made piteous appeals to his eyes by continuous rubbing to keep them from closing automatically. And often he had two or three hours of work to perform in the hay field before he could have any breakfast.

To this day a thrill goes through the mind of David the man when he hears the cricket's evening song, because it brings back the recollection of evenings when twilight faded into darkness, while he bent beside his father as a boy and carried the bundles of wheat into shocks and raked the stubble where they lay.

The carnival of the crickets can be appreciated by those only who have heard their shrill crescendo which reaches its climax as the last ray of light falls from the western sky. To this day the song of the meadow lark brings back to David a flood of memories from the first dawn of consciousness upon his mind. The liquid melody that filled the air with its vibrations, and came with a never ceasing repetition

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

spontaneously from the heart of this little golden-breasted optimist, as it perched upon the fence, or soared high overhead, had in it admonition, and inspiration and faith and courage. The meadow lark lists himself as the ally and friend of all those who toil in the open air, and he throws all the energy of his soul into the effort to furnish entertainment for them.

Another friendly visitor to the new-plowed field was the bluebird. His mode of entertainment was not by song, but by a peculiar habit of poising in the mid air, and surveying the field from this vantage point in quest of worms and larval insects which the plow had dislodged from their winter abode.

The little David had a friendly acquaintance with all the birds. He knew the mode each had of building its nest, and he pondered the mystery that was going on in the little speckled eggs, as the mother bird gave out the warmth of her own breast to hasten onward the miracle that she was producing by the magic spell of her instincts. He was familiar with the eloquent appeal of widely opened mouths as little downy fledglings importuned the passing stranger for food. He knew the hazardous hanging of the blackbird's nest, always over the running brook, and the terrible fate that sometimes overtook its immature inmates when they crawled over the edge. He

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

knew the nesting place of the mourning dove, and often saw its two white eggs burst open at the end and deliver their downy strangers into the little bird home.

The instinct of this little boy was always humane. He never took advantage of the weak things of nature to do them harm. He sometimes mingled his tears with the piteous appeals of the parent birds when some calamity had overtaken their immature progeny. He sometimes made captives of the birds as other boys do, but the thought of their imprisonment was always painful to him, and soon the humane instinct impelled him to open the doors and set them free.

And David was an unfriended boy whom none of his kindred could comprehend. His soul was like an Aeolian harp which vibrated to every wood note and thrilled with every breath of sentiment. His love for flowers amounted to an overwhelming passion. The warm spring days often found him wandering alone over the hills that flanked his native village. He sought the red bells and the pinks and the mountain daisies in their sequestered spots, where their brilliant hues made contrast with the gray landscape, and where their perfumed breath gave fragrance to the passing breeze. The larkspur

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

and the honeysuckle, and the mountain mosses and the sweet williams were all listed among his favorites. To see these beautiful forms spring spontaneously from the earth untrammelled by the hand of man; to think of their seeds falling from the lap of the wandering winds, and pushing their delicate rootlets down into the dull earth to extract pigment for the gorgeous corolla, and nectar for the bee, and fragrance for the passing stranger—all this was such a manifestation of the spontaneous power of nature, such an exhibit of the occult intellect and sentiment back of this phenomenon of life always brought a thrill to the mind of young David.

He looked up at the rainbow, and wondered at the grace of its curve and the brilliance of its colors, and tried in vain to imagine the reason why it should stretch itself so beautifully across the summer sky. Years afterward, when he learned the laws of optics, and knew how the sunlight was bent by refraction and reflection in the rain drop until it was separated into its primary colors and thrown back in lurid vibrations at a certain angle with the eye, his question was answered, and the explanation brought into his soul a thrill of delight which seemed to lift his feet from the earth.

He threw out the eternal question-mark before

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

everything in heaven and earth, and pondered much over the possible explanation of the phenomena of nature he saw all around him. He was denied in a great measure the companionship of other children, and sought an outlet for his soul's emotions in his contact with nature. The music of the babbling brook and the sigh of the summer breezes were articulate with language that seemed to come from the great abyss—that seemed to bear a message of boundless space and endless duration of years. The wild crash from the black thunder cloud seemed to be a token from the great reserve of dynamic forces, which stand as the background of all these mundane phenomena. The snows of winter and the showers of summer were manifestations of that kindly Providence which spreads the bounties of the earth beneath the feet of all his creatures.

But when the life of this pensive child was thrown open to the world of books, there came a new dispensation into his career. How he loved them only they can tell who have revelled in the same passion. Long before he had learned to read, his father one day brought the old National series of text books into their home, and the thrill that went through the mind of the boy at the sight of them is remembered to this day.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

Simply to hold them in his hands and look at them brought a certain satisfaction which whiled away hours of time.

David, the little ungainly David, soon out-distanced all the boys and girls of the village school. One of the greatest victories of his life came when he stood up, a little ragamuffin urchin with threadbare trousers and bare feet, in the spelling match, and put to rout all the students, great and small, of the whole establishment and stood unmatched alone.

But those same students, like young people in general, were slow to read the writing on the wall. They failed completely to grasp the significance of such a demonstration, and still made of David a social outcast, and threw him back on his own resources for entertainment, an entertainment which was easy to provide now since books had come into his life. His own reticent disposition was no doubt in some measure responsible for his social ostracism, and a certain pride which drew the line at being rated at anything less than par value. If people wished to discount him in the least and place him at a social level below where he belonged, he simply refused to deal with them, and that was the end of it.

The midnight hour often found him bending over a favorite volume, or pondering the solution of a

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

mathematical problem. Often, too, his father ascended the stairs to drive him to bed when he had become utterly oblivious to the flight of time. He was a gormandizer of books, and read every volume that came his way. He studied algebra and geometry and higher arithmetic with nothing but his own intuitions and his text books to guide him, and as he followed the plow or scattered the seed wheat over the fallow field, the principles of Euclid were revolving in his brain and finding solution. He read history and fiction and poetry with that indiscrimination which results from having no one to select for us or to point out the way whereby we can make our own selection. He read and pondered his Bible with all that faith and sincerity which is the natural heritage of a soul uncontaminated by the weakness and evil of the world. There were hours in the life of this lonely boy when he was so filled with the ecstasy of his own thoughts and emotions that he seemed to be lifted from the earth. He would have given worlds for the companionship of one who could share his emotions and partake of his mental state. He felt that if he could but unburden his soul to somebody who would understand, it would be a satisfaction beyond anything else this world could supply. But his outstretched, supplicating



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

arms found nothing to grasp, and he was thrown back upon his own resources for consolation.

Denied even the limited social experiences of a village, the ungainly David made a sorry figure when he attempted to mingle in a social way with the boys and girls of the town a few miles distant. And they were as charitable as young people generally are, but could not help discriminating against him, and making side remarks about him, which sometimes, directly or indirectly, came to his ears. If they could have but comprehended the sensitive stuff he was made of, and known how disparaging words burned into his bosom's core, they would have been moved by pity to more toleration and more discrimination in their criticisms.

Many times in after years has David confronted the same people who thus unwittingly had wounded him, but now it was to render services to them which his special training had qualified him for, and he thanked God that the opportunity had come to return good for evil. Only they who have had the experience can understand that paralysis or disuse of all our social attributes which overshadows us when our tender years are spent in seclusion, and we have known nothing of the contact of our fellow men. Society is the great educator. The boy of the



## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

village or the lonely farm house inherits a handicap socially, for which years of training can hardly compensate.

But sometimes the ungainly boy of the village, after a few laps in the race, takes first position, and moves on past all the rest to the astonishment and chagrin of those who had sized him up for a scrub.

How little we know, when we look into the unmeaning eyes of a freckle-faced country boy, what latent powers may be slumbering within his brain, waiting an opportunity to burst into life and to lift him into the class which was born to do the serious work of the world. Life is full of just such paradoxes and surprises.

When the little boy David was stung to the quick by the cruel words of some thoughtless boy or girl, he did not wince before the pointed shaft, but he said to himself, "Some day they will comprehend."

That magical phrase "some day"—what romance does it not possess when it comes from the life of an earnest boy who has character and soul to back it! Beware of the boy who builds air castles for the future. Some day they will be made of more substantial stuff than the web of dreams. In every mind of power, there is a premonition, a forecast of what its outcome is to be. The soul holds always

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

in its latent consciousness an inventory of its stock in trade. And when we hear a crude Lincoln from the backwoods say, as his heart burns within him at the sight of fellow creatures being sold like beasts of the field, "If ever I have the power to strike that institution, I will hit it hard," we have a forecast of the great Lincoln of the future, who was to make an epoch in the world's events; who was to open a new chapter in the history of his country.

And the little boy David had premonitions of the future, as he bent over the wearisome tasks that each day brought forth.

It would have seemed the very superlative of egotism, if one could have read aloud those day dreams, revolving in the mind of this apparently insignificant boy. He could not decide whether his aim should be to become the governor of his native State, or some ecclesiastical prelate, or some professional man who should move into the front rank of his fellows and challenge the right of way with the foremost competitors. All he could conclude was that it was his privilege to climb, and this he proposed to do with all the energy of his soul.

God had blessed him with a retentive memory and an insatiable love for books, and he knew that these were the factors that would materialize his dreams

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

if they were turned to the proper advantage. What did it matter to him whether he was wounded by the gibes and sneers of others, or whether he was slighted by those whose duty it was to be kind to him? While the boys and girls he knew were squandering their days in frivolous talk and their evenings in useless revelry; while they were flitting about like butterflies who have only a few brief days to display their gaudy wings before they become dull grubs, he was laying the foundation for a career which, one day in the future, was to fill them with astonishment.

From the dim distant years of childhood there comes to David now, over the horizon of memory, some quaint and queer recollections.

His mother was anxious, as all good mothers are, to have him clothed respectably. To that end she exercised her ingenuity to make him a suit of gray jeans, which was the staple product of that part of the country. There were no tailors available in those days, and every mother was obliged to assume that function for the boys and men of her own household. One can imagine that there was a great variety of style and workmanship, depending on the aptitude of each particular mother, and that little regard was paid to the latest styles

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

and fashions. What David remembers about this particular suit in question is that the seams which belong normally at the sides of the leg had a proneness to rotate round to the front, making it necessary to keep up a constant watch to keep them adjusted to the way of respectability.

In this grotesque array David went with his people over to the town, one holiday, to witness a celebration. Among the sports for children was a greasy pole, which each boy had the privilege of trying to climb for a certain prize which was stationed at the top. Without change of clothing or any other preparation, David undertook the difficult task. But he does not remember to have accomplished it. From the scene of these festivities with his clothes covered with grease, and with all the curiosity of a boy, David found his way to the blacksmith shop of a certain respectable tradesman, who was plying his craft in spite of the holiday to satisfy the importunity of some hapless farmer of the village, whose need had become so pressing that it could not be postponed. David proffered to blow the bellows while the worthy smith worked at the anvil. The boy's position at his task was such that a part of the blast, laden as it was with particles of carbon in the

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

smoke, played upon his grease-covered clothes. The combination of soot and grease established a color in parts of his new trousers which was beyond all efforts on his part at removal. In this dishonored plight he was obliged to face the frowns of father and mother and make his way with the family caravan homeward. Just what his well merited punishment was, David cannot now remember, but the lesson that comes to him over the years as he is surrounded by his own little boys, is that the judgment of children is defective, because their minds are immature, and that the admonition of grease and soot, and the black indelible stain they leave, are object lessons more potent by far for the future, than all the cruel impressions we can make, by venting our anger in corporal punishment.

It takes a certain number of knocks and falls and bruises to learn the law of gravitation. You cannot teach it by precept, nor can you enforce obedience to it by the rod. But when the child learns the pain and discomfiture that result from flying in the face of it, he will obey, because it presents itself to him as an inexorable law, with penalties of immediate execution.

David the man is tidy in his apparel now, not because of the whipping he received for compounding

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

grease and soot into the fabric of his new trousers, but because he has learned the folly of slovenliness and the expediency of being clean.

As David grew into his 'teens he was permitted by his parents to attend the public schools of the larger towns. There he acquitted himself well as a student. His bent was mathematical. He found it no difficult matter to outstrip most of his competitors, and the glory of his life came when he could outcypher the teacher. He gained a certain prestige with his kindred for his aptness at school, so much so that when his dereliction of duty at the tasks he was supposed to accomplish on the farm became exasperating beyond endurance his father would say: "Bundle up his things and we will send him off to school. He is no good for anything else."

But one day the voice of reason came to the little David, and he said to himself, "Why should I so antagonize my parents by the careless method of my life? All the benefits that can come to me now are in their hands to bestow or to withhold at their pleasure. And so David resolved upon a complete reversal of his policy. It should henceforth be the study of his life to please father and mother. Their will from this time on should be his law.

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

Everything was to be done not his way but their way, no matter how his own judgment might dictate the contrary method. And the domestic troubles of David came to a sudden end, and the plan of his education took tangible form, with father to back him to the limit.

The district schools had ceased to be of any service to him. He had gone over the same beaten path a number of times, the terminus of which was fixed by the limit of the teacher's qualification. When the end of the book was reached, instead of providing for a step higher, the worthy pedagogue of those days would simply turn back to the beginning, and start the whole process over again. How many times David learned by rote to extract the square root and the cube root he cannot now remember, but he does recall that when the underlying principles of these mathematical processes were explained to him in high school, it was a complete new revelation, and he never needed to think about a rule afterwards.

David had decided that unless he could gain access to the high school, he would have to undertake the task of educating himself. And to that end his private room was provided with a heating stove and a table, and stocked with all the books the house-



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

hold possessed. And after the hard day's work on the farm was ended and the evening chores disposed of, David sought the seclusion of his room, and read and pondered and dreamed. In the morning long before the other inmates of the household were astir, he was at his books again, with all the zeal that is born of refreshing sleep; and when storms swept over the valley, and made work on the farm impossible, David in his silent retreat was tilling another field which one day in the future was to develop and produce a bounteous harvest.

A certain philosophy developed in the mind of the boy as he read. He seemed to gain the ascendancy over all his mental processes, and to have himself completely under control. So thoroughly did he believe in himself that he wondered why other people did not believe in him. The unkind words of those who insinuated that his peculiar bent was the indication of a strange eccentricity were very hurtful to him. But he bided his time without reply. He had yet to learn that the greatest offense one can commit against a rival is to succeed where he has failed.

Your life never amounts to much until you rouse a storm of opposition and criticism from your contemporaries. When you throw a ball against



## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

the wall it must bounce back, and the harder you throw, the more vigorous will be the rebound. That wave of criticism which arises all around you when you begin to do something which others have not done is the rebound of your action, and the more vigorous your effort, the more vigorous will be the response to it. So, young man, whoever you are, whenever a wave of criticism sets in against you in answer to earnest, honest effort, keep right on in that direction, and be assured that you are on the right road. After awhile your critics will come to the temple you have erected, and become earnest worshipers there. When the years have brought your vindication, the very people who opposed you will delight to tell the story of your struggles, and to relate the things you accomplished in the face of opposition.

The inexperienced boy David, in his generous outlook upon life, imagined that all people are moved by altruistic motives. He had yet to learn the meagre soul, the selfish motive, the suspicious nature of many people. And this is the saddest, the most disappointing experience of any developing mind. To see people abdicate their high estate, their priceless birthright of honor and altruism, and become selfish and mean and suspicious and

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

dishonest is such a condescension that it shocks the sensibilities of those whose inexperience has kept them in blissful ignorance of such possibilities.

And David had a graphic lesson in psychology one day that served by its analogy a useful purpose in the after years. He saw a little cat pursued by five or six big dogs, all barking and growling in furious anger, ready to tear the little feline refugee to pieces at the first opportunity. But the kitten, true to the instinct of her race, had taken a strategic position under the floor of a barn, and by violent sputtering and scratching was holding her formidable antagonists at bay. David, moved by pity, came to her rescue, but the hand he had projected under the floor to assist her, was scratched ten times before he could withdraw it. The little feline mind was so inflamed by the thought of its formidable enemies, that it could not distinguish between friend and foe, and it treated them both alike.

This is just the mental condition of many people. They allow their minds to dwell upon grievances, either real or imaginary, until they see acts of hostility in the very effort to do them good. They accept of the gratuity with a feeling that some ulterior motive has prompted its bestowal, and pro-

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

ceed to berate the benefactor, as though he were doing them an injury.

The lesson is, that we should have charity in our hearts even for those ungrateful people who accept of our bounty and then turn to rend us. They are acting out the logical deductions of minds perverted by inheritance or faulty training.

A day of great rejoicing came to the little David, as he followed the routine work of the farm. His parents had decided that he might go to high school. Out of his frugality some little money had been saved, and the father proffered to supplement it with the amount necessary to pay his board and tuition for the winter. How well he remembers the preparation of his clothing and the selection of the books he was to take and the daily admonition of his parents as to his conduct when away. Every boy and girl can imagine this who has gone through the same process.

And the fear and suspense that were in his mind at the thought of mingling with boys and girls from the cities and larger towns, where they would be instructed in social forms and have a heritage of gentle breeding. David felt ill at ease among them, and was always conscious of his limitations on the social side, and fearful that he might com-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

mit some blunder. These well-dressed boys and girls from the cities seemed to be so grand in his eyes that he was overawed and overwhelmed by them. He had still to learn the great lesson in life, that tinsel may simulate pure gold and have all the outward appearance of the royal metal.

As David now looks around, after a score of years have rolled over his head, he sees the social stars of the first magnitude reduced almost to nothing. Some of them indeed have ceased to be social factors, but have associated themselves into that milky way of social star dust, which projects itself dead and motionless in the interspaces between the active constellations. Their light no longer shines as a distinct entity, but mingles itself with the haze of others of its kind to map out a huge meaningless blur on the social horizon, where nothing is pretended and nothing has been accomplished. Of the score or more of the social leaders of this particular high school, David looks all about himself in vain to discover one of them who has risen to distinction. They are wiped off the map completely. They were gaudy butterflies then, but they have become dull grubs now, which grope in darkness, and seek the back streets of the villages to hide their faces from the sight of men. They live automatically, breath-

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

ing so much oxygen, and consuming so much water and food, maintaining the vegetative processes of life, and waiting until the merciful hand of Fate waves their exit and relieves them of the necessity of living any more.

But the ranks of those who are doing the world's work, and giving the world its new thoughts are being recruited from the honest plodder, whose underlying motives were not for social distinction, but for knowledge, who knew the value of the fleeting moments, and doled them out as the miser doles out his coins when necessity demands them. And the transformation of a score of years has been a complete one. It is a picture printed from the negative—the light has become darkness and the darkness has become light. That scripture which says, "The last shall be first and the first shall be last" is wonderfully true to life. We look over the sweep of a score of years since we were boys and girls together, and we see its absolute fulfillment.

As a student at high school David was diligent and painstaking and enthusiastic. He threw all the energy of his soul into the work, and never was known to report himself unprepared at classes. There are in his possession now text-books of geometry and trigonometry, with the corners all charred

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

and burned, which tell their story of his effort to force the day into the night, and when falling asleep in spite of himself, the book in his hand went against the heating stove to receive its brand of diligence and perpetuate the incidents of that struggle.

At that particular time David had no fixed goal toward which he was aiming. He was impelled by an instinct of self-development, as the duckling has an instinct to swim. Engrossed in the all absorbing studies of his curriculum, he was all unmindful of the future. He seemed to know that the events of his life would throw themselves into logical sequence. His one aim now was to become master of the fundamentals.

The choice of a profession was a thing that came later in life. When David used to sit out in the evenings to read his star maps by the aid of a dim lantern light, and to figure out the topography of the different constellations, the people of the village, and even his own kindred, began to have their doubts about his sanity. But Cassiopeia, and Ursa Major and the Pleiades sent their message of sympathy over the abyss to console the eager mind of the struggling boy. Natural philosophy and chemistry yielded their fascinating secrets, and above all geology opened its volumes of rock-written history,

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

and invested the mountains and the rivers and the cliffs of rock and even the common boulders with a meaning they had never before possessed. From the little circumscribed horizon which was hedged in by his meagre knowledge of the physical world, and by the extreme orthodox position of all the people he had associated with, David rose to the conception of boundless space and endless duration of years. Long afterward when David as a professional man traveled through the mountain passes and valleys of his native section, as his daily duty necessitated him to do, his smattering of geological lore furnished the materials for a continuous speculation on the age and origin and probable correlation of the cliffs of rock and gorges and fossil remains that he encountered by the wayside, and every rude boulder had for him a story of thrilling fascination.

And David came up against the great world problems of philosophy and religion, and was made to wonder at the different conclusions that had been arrived at by various classes of men in all ages; and at the positiveness of their contentions and the vehemence with which they asserted themselves. He had grasped in his mind the conception of the boundless extent of the universe, and the



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

inexorable laws that govern all its processes, and in these great thoughts he saw a vindication of the contention for Deity. Such law and order without a law Giver and a Regulator was to his mind an absurdity. Materialism was to him then, as it is now, the negation of the universe.

But why should men group themselves into leagues of allegiance known as churches to attribute different purposes and different methods to the God they all worship? Why should others contend that no God is necessary to the cosmic process, while they tacitly admit the omniscience that is manifest in the perfection of the laws of nature? All these things were most confusing to the evolving mind of the boy. And then there was his own relationship to the phenomena of the world. Whence came he? what was he here for? and whither was he to go? These were queries he could not get away from even if he tried. But why should he try to get away from them? Do they not involve the most momentous consequences of anything in this world? I take issue with all those who maintain the position that it is dangerous to confront the problem of the relationship of modern scientific development with the religious dogmas that have come down to us from ages past.



## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

In the first place, you cannot, if you should try, keep intelligent minds away from this problem. It is the most fascinating theme of thought in all the world. If it is put under the ban of the church by over zealous sectarians, it will smoulder beneath the surface with ever increasing force, until one day it will burst forth into a conflagration. This was the fate of the Catholic church at the beginning of the Reformation. The idea that men were to cease to think for themselves, but in all things to be governed by the traditions of bygone ages; that the dead past was to step into the living present and dominate absolutely its thought, was the thing which turned the hand of progress back a thousand years, and kept untold millions of people bound hand and foot in the thralldom of superstition. The middle ages present to us a spectacle of human intelligence held completely in abeyance by the iron hand of tradition.

It was not that the world was turned over to the dominion of Satan. It was not that mankind had degenerated into an inferior breed. Physically and potentially men were just the same during that whole dark period as they had been in the rising dawn of enlightenment which had preceded it, as they are now in the noon-tide

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of civilization, with the sun of truth ascended to the zenith. It was simply an example on a world scale of the working out of the idea that human intelligence must not be permitted to penetrate fields hitherto unexplored; that human beings must not think away from the traditions of the past, no matter how much these traditions have become perverted, or how incompatible they have become with common sense and reason.

Stagnation was the result. And in the mental hebétude that settled like a cloud over the mind of men, the weak were preyed upon by the strong—the forces of evil thrive ever better in the darkness—and the edict that went forth in the name of the Church was absolute and unconditional. There was no higher court of human intelligence to pass upon appeals nor to consider the possible errors of that tribunal which held itself to be infallible. In such a system, the dead forms were maintained, but the spirit of religion was extinguished. For a thousand years no scientific advancement was made, and no new thought given to the world. Men became vicious and brutal in their instincts. Vice ran riot; justice had no place in the world. But beneath the surface of this apparently motionless social fabric, there was a movement in progress that was one day to tear it asunder.

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

Even the muffler of church anthemas could not prevent men from thinking, though the terrible consequences, temporal and spiritual, which that involved were sufficient to deter all but the bravest from asserting themselves. After long centuries of this world-stagnation had worn themselves away, the accumulated mind pressure from within became so intense that it burst asunder the relentless bonds which had held it, and with them the whole social and ecclesiastical structure which had made them possible.

The example of individuals, who, with their lives in their hands, dared to proclaim the right of independent thought was soon to bear fruit. Whole nations emancipated themselves, and went over to the new movement, which in art and science and literature we call the Renaissance, which in religion we call the Reformation. And the great world system which had held the minds of men in subjection for a thousand years was irreparably divided.

Any religious system which demands of its subjects the absolute surrender of individual opinion will find itself defeated in the end. For the world is built on the plan of progression, and no system of thought, secular or religious, can for any great length of time stop the onward movement of things.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

As with society, so with the individual; limitation of thought means limitation of growth. Faculties unemployed become palsied. Nature has laid on us the injunction that we put our mental talents out at usury or we forfeit the right to them. God gave us intelligence that we might employ it to a useful purpose, and act well our part in the great world drama of progression.

What a formidable thing is the term orthodoxy! In ages past it has held the prerogative of life or death in its all-powerful grasp. The greatest penalty at its disposal in this enlightened age is social ostracism, and even this it applies with an uncertain issue. In the ultimate analysis orthodoxy means conformity to tradition. The definition of the term has been modified with the more liberal outlook on life that our modern civilization has brought about. Thanks to the new interpretation, we can still be orthodox without necessarily believing that the whale swallowed Jonah. With the limitations we have thrown about it, the term is useful in its application. Modern speculation tends to veer ever too far away from the old moorings, and to drift without rudder or helm to guide it. Men have become fanatical in the application of new theories, and are demanding the same unquestioning

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

acquiescence in their position that was demanded by the religious bigots of the middle ages.

A man, up to very recent years, could have no respectable standing in the scientific world, who was not willing to pronounce the shibboleth of Mr. Darwin's theory in its material aspect. Speculations on the spiritual side of life are altogether unpopular, and carry with them the idea of heretical departure from fixed opinions. Modern science is taking altogether too much for granted. The modern scientific mind needs liberalizing from its traditions. Our constant search should be for the truth. There are not in this world of ours two distinct sets of truths, incompatible with one another. There can be no conflict between religion and science if we have true religion and true science. Incompatibility means misunderstanding. Truth is not divided against itself. God is not the author of confusion. If we endeavor to deny men the right of freedom of thought in philosophy and religion, we shall continue the so-called conflict between science and religion indefinitely into the future.

But I am forgetting myself, and putting too much personality into my narrative. I am describing the play of emotions that developed in the mind of the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

young man who first comes up against the great problems of science and religion. I shall, therefore, proceed with my story.

Our David had been a great reader, but his reading had been of the authors of the old school. Perusal of Rollin and much attention to the Bible had given him a strong orthodox bias, and his reasoning had all along been the method that makes all things conform to preconceived ideas and empirical thought. But now he came up against the great problems of geological time and of evolution. How was he to harmonize these with that tradition which made the earth only six thousand years old and initiated the species of life all at once by a simple command of Deity? It was such a simple, easy process to have a world created in that way, and required so little mental effort to decipher the plan of it! The untutored boy had not yet dared to call in question any of the old traditions. In his mind it amounted to a mortal crime to raise such a question.

But a riper mentality completely changed his viewpoint. And he said to himself, "In this great universe which God has created and placed at my disposal with all its varied things of beauty and of interest, who should have the right to limit the processes of my mind, to put a barrier in my

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

way and say, "You can think thus far and no farther." It is my prerogative, it is my God-given birthright, to throw out the eternal question mark before everything in heaven and earth, and challenge the right of way with every purported truth. And the pendulum swung too far the other way and the boy found himself drifting from his moorings without rudder or compass to guide him.

Among the rural folk who were the associates of David he found nobody who seemed to see things from his viewpoint, or who was troubling himself about anything in religion or science, but the old theological dogmas. He wondered why it was that he seemed so different from other people. Sometimes it seemed to him that an evil power had got possession of him and that he was irreparably lost. But a more mature mentality brought him in contact with many more of his kind, and then he comprehended that he was but one of a multitude who were struggling with the great world problem.

And are you, my reader, in sympathy with this life-and-death struggle, which this honest, conscientious boy found himself confronted with? I know that if your mentality is of the same kind, you yourself have shed tears of anguish and sent up prayers to the throne of Grace for guidance. It is the ef-



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

fort of the churches to evade these burning questions which has emptied their pews and brought religion into discredit. The permanence of any institution depends on the amount of truth it has back of it. Error though it comes in the name of Deity must crumble and decay. Only the truth can stand.

This book is written twenty years after the struggle began, and reflects the final deductions to date on this momentous theme. And David has learned to tolerate the opinions of others, as he trusts the indulgent reader will tolerate the opinions which are to follow in a subsequent chapter and which he alone stands responsible for.

David's enthusiasm, while still at the high school, grew with the years and he listed himself always with the competitors for first position in his classes. And they were happy years despite the handicaps that were entailed from his rural extraction and his physical imperfections.

Recognizing the important bearing that ability at public speaking has on the career of any man, no matter what his profession, David determined that he would develop himself along this line.

There was a certain Sunday morning meeting he used to attend, where students and teachers volunteered to speak as they were moved upon by the



## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

Spirit. He resolved that at one of these sessions he would make a beginning. When the audience was wrought up with enthusiasm and students were rising to their feet in quick succession, he chose an opportune moment to sandwich himself into the program, for the time was in much demand. No sooner had he gained his feet than his head began to whirl, and all the ideas he had ever had seemed to depart from him. He sat down in shame and confusion.

No one who has not gone through the process can imagine the melancholy condition of a sensitive mind so humiliated. He was defeated, but not conquered. He resolved then and there that with the aid of God he would surmount every obstacle that might come in his way.

A few days later a call was made for volunteers to speak on a certain subject before the whole school assembled. The hand of David went up in response, though it took all the courage he could muster to raise it. This time he proposed to maintain his mental balance by having notes to refer to. When the hour arrived he confronted his audience with fear and trembling, and in some sort of way got through his task without making a balk. But the old master rose to his feet and soundly berated

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

the frightened boy for daring to appear in such a meeting with notes to speak from.

After such a steam roller process the boy felt himself smashed so flatly to the earth that he could hardly raise his head. But his resolution only grew stronger as obstacles multiplied. Every opportunity that presented itself found him confronting the public. Gradually the latent fear which had so nearly overwhelmed him gave way to confidence, and people began to express satisfaction at his oratorical efforts.

As an acknowledgment of his success there came to him as a great surprise an invitation and request from the faculty that he should deliver the address on mathematics at the commencement exercises to be held in a public auditorium in the presence of all the prominent people of the community.

Into this final appearance before the faculty and the student body and the assembled multitude he threw all the energy of his soul. To them it was possibly nothing more than a passing number on the program, rendered with some degree of credit by a boy of backwoods extraction. But to him it was the culmination of one of the great struggles of his life, a milestone in the way of his progress.

David the man has many vivid recollections of

## WINNER OF REAL VICTORIES

boys and girls who came and went like flakes of a winter storm to alight upon the earth and take up their place in the snowdrifts we call cities, or to fall upon the level plane where all things are equal. With the eye of philosophy he analyzes now their mental and moral make-up and is convinced that to each one has been dealt out just exactly the reward he merited. For nature is just in all her processes. The eternal chancellors of God are cause and effect. Any man who tries to gain credit and favor by any other method than that based upon value received, is a thief and a robber, and in the end he will find himself deceived and defeated. But how little we comprehended in that school-boy day these inexorable laws of nature; and how little we thought of the great readjustment that was to come with the years, when we were to go out each individually and meet the real problems of life!

It was a play world then full of gossamer dreams. Fine personality, fine manners, and fine clothes seemed to be the elements of success in life. Merit for merit's sake we hardly perceived. The ungainly boy from the backwoods town seemed to have a hopeless case. He hardly dared to believe in himself. But twenty years of real experience have supplanted the gossamer dreams with real facts. Life's

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

method and motive with each one have rendered their verdict. Honor has developed where it was least expected, and discredit has fallen upon heads that were erect with pride.

## CHAPTER IX

### SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

**A**MONG the many illustrations of the outcome of reputations which were based on tinsel, and show, David remembers a certain young man and a certain young lady, who came each from different parts of the country and matriculated at the high school. The verdict of the students was that they were both very handsome. They dressed well and had splendid manners. At least, this was the opinion of the backwoods boys and girls, though it would no doubt have been much modified by more mature judgment. At any rate they were the belle and beau of the school, and the boys and girls gave them the right of way—a privilege which they accepted as a royal prerogative and regarded as their birthright. To the untutored mind of David they were certainly grand. They seemed to be out of his class completely and he marveled at the sight of them. Nature seemed to him to have strewn their pathway with roses and opened the way of success in life without requiring of them a single effort. No doubt they

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

were convinced in their own mind of the same thing.

When the school days were ended they went their way as the rest of the students did and were lost to view for many years.

After the school days your star of the first magnitude and of the second magnitude and of all the magnitudes is lost to vision for a period of time. Many of them are gone forever, but some rise over the horizon again and ascend toward the zenith augmenting as they go. Some become satellites, shining, when they do shine, by the light they borrow from others around which they must always revolve. And others become luminaries, emitting their own light, and drawing a retinue of satellites in their train. Some disintegrate into star dust and disseminate into the milky way; some shoot across the heavens like meteors and burn themselves out in a great flare of light, ending in ashes and cinders; some collide with others and burst themselves asunder in the impact; and some become the fixed stars whose light shines on forever and ever.

And David is scanning the heavens now with the mental telescope, watching for the stars of by-gone days to rise again. When ten years have elapsed and they fail to come he marks them as very doubtful, and when twenty years brings no tid-

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

ings of them he classifies them as hopeless and marks them off his chart.

The young couple we are describing had gone into the limbo to await their fate. By accident David called one day in a little grocery store in a sequestered village remote from the towns and cities and met a middle aged woman serving in the capacity of saleswoman, dealing out sugar and coal oil in small quantities and marking the score against her neighbors in a well-worn account book. The finger of time had engraved its record upon her countenance; the frosts of forty years had begun their bleaching process. Her gown was seedy, her hair unkempt, and withal she had a forlorn appearance that was sad to contemplate. The poetry had all gone out of her life to be supplanted by the dullest kind of prose.

A few direct questions brought out the fact that she was the young lady of twenty years before who had possessed so many charms and excited so much admiration. She had parted with the companion of her social triumphs when the school days were ended, and had been sharing the fortunes of an unlucky man till he died and left her in poverty to battle with the world alone and fight the grim fight for the very existence of herself and a half dozen hapless

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

children whose ragged apparel and uncared persons attested too well the tragedy that life had thrust upon them.

The train of memories evoked by this chance meeting excited in the mind of David a curiosity to know something of the outcome of the young man who had stood by her so valiantly and served her with so much gallantry in the dream life of twenty years ago.

He had retired to his native town and buried himself in its meagre affairs. His reputation had limited itself to a radius not to exceed three miles in each direction. To produce a few cabbages and cucumbers for the summer market, and to garner enough food stuff to carry them over the winter was the height of his ambition. Even a mole without eyesight has sense enough to do this. As a social factor he had simply gone off the map.

I am telling this not to cast any reflection on the time honored profession of farmer to which I myself was trained, but to recall the huge bluff this young man put up with his fine neckties and his small-heeled boots, and the way he backed down and receded when society called the bluff and demanded him to make good. Every social unit will stand for its integral value sooner or later. The bluff game



## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

may work for a time but it cannot endure. Sham and pretense are ephemeral things. They melt away before the real facts of life as the dews of the morning melt before the rising sun.

In contrast to these fine appearing people David remembers a boy from one of the southern counties of his native State who came to high school and took up his position at the lowest point in the social scale, and began to make his way. Of all the forlorn hopes one can imagine, this boy seemed to have the least chance. He was clothed in homespun trousers and wore blue jumpers and overalls on every occasion, social or otherwise. His parents were poor and he was obliged to work as janitor for three or four hours out of every day to keep his board bill and running expenses going. This handicap kept him low in his classes, but the other boys and girls did not think of the tragedy that was weighing down upon him and retarding his progress. They regarded him as a dunce who belonged at the foot of the class by the calibre of intellect he was born with. And indeed he was not a gem of the first water intellectually, but he was a plodder with a soul in him which had no thought of defeat no matter how discouraging the outlook. In the silence of the midnight hours he plied his books when all the world

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

beside was hushed in slumber. And in the dingy little room with its meager furnishings where he spent his odd hours and rested for the night, he dared to dream dreams and build air castles.

Gradually the method of his life began to win out; one by one the fancy fellows who had disdained him were distanced in the race. It was a repetition of the old fable of the tortoise and the hare. The one mental characteristic which always wins out in the end is persistence. Brilliance of mind is often linked with other conditions which completely nullify its effects. Often it is a handicap rather than an advantage. But pertinacity is a winner every time, even when the odds seem hopelessly against it. Beware of the boy of fixed purpose. Even though he may seem dull and stupid, some day his light will shine and the world will hear from him. When the meteor flash of his disdainful fellows has extinguished itself and left but the cinders and ashes to mark its train, he will be shining among the fixed stars whose twinkling light goes on and on forever.

David has watched the career of this particular young man, and has seen his sphere of influence and usefulness widen with the rolling years. Honors have been conferred upon him. Positions of the highest degree of responsibility and trust have

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

seemed to fall so naturally into his way that people regarded them as his birthright and asked no questions. Quite recently he was elevated to the highest position in the educational circles of his native State and the honor descended upon him so easily, and with so little apparent effort that his influential competitors were filled with amazement.

His life is pre-eminently the vindication of the law of compensation. While the other young men and young women who seemed to be so much more favored than he were dissipating their energies in the social whirl, he was laying the foundation in silence and obscurity for that career which was one day to lift him bodily out of their class and place him on a social and intellectual plane so far above them that they could never hope to overtake him. Their day of satisfaction came twenty years ago. They danced, and they have had to pay the piper. Their butterfly wings were ephemeral, and when they withered and detached themselves, there was nothing left but the dull grub which had lost its power of flight and was doomed to creep and crawl for the rest of its natural life.

For David as for every other young man, the most pertinent question that obtruded itself into his life was the choice of a profession.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

I am quite sure that many successes and many failures in life are traceable to the right or wrong solution of this very problem. Among the multitude of professional or quasi-professional men are many who would have been much more successful as brick masons or as farmers, and among the toilers with the hand are many who have mental qualities undiscovered which would make them famous if they but knew themselves.

As I work on this manuscript the newspapers are full of the advertisements of a great comedian who hails from across the ocean and is heralded with such a reputation as a fun maker that hundreds of people are turned away from the packed music halls which greet him in every city. Wealth has rolled into his coffers as though the touch of Alladin's lamp were at his disposal, and the great and the mighty of all lands are clamoring for the chance to hear him. The biographers of this famous man tell us that he was a common coal heaver only a few brief years ago and that he began to attract attention by singing to his fellow laborers as they rested to eat their lunch in the mid-day. The men from the mines were so enthusiastic over his songs that the crowds he gathered became an incumbrance to the works and his employers made complaint that he

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

was becoming a nuisance. But Harry Lauder did not quit singing. He took to the stage, with the result that he is at this time the highest paid professional of his class in the world.

The fact that great men in all lines have tended to come in groups is an indication of the influence for development which one mind possesses over other minds. One man is born with initiative enough to break over the barriers of traditional thought, and in the effulgence of his light other men discover themselves. There is no doubt that what the poet says is literally true of the flowers which waste their sweetness on the desert air. The only advice I have to give to the young man who is grappling with the momentous question of the choice of a life's profession is that he make it a really serious problem, and weigh and analyze himself with the philosopher's scale as though he were deciding the problem for some other individual. With the most careful scrutiny of our stock of mental materials we might decide wrongly. But we are much less likely to do so if we enter into the problem with the real analytic spirit.

With the close of his high school course our David had gone back to the old farm and rested for the time being in its infinite repose. The song of

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

the bird and the murmur of the brook were music in his ears as of old, but the flowers of his native hills, and the spangled canopy of the night had a different meaning to him now. The rainbow of the summer sky had sent its message down, the story of the dimensions and distances of the sun and the moon and the stars had been told. The great laws of the universe had dawned upon his mind. The wonders of the world had multiplied with his mental expansion. Religion had readjusted itself on a rational basis, and the obligation of man to his fellow man had assumed serious proportions in his life. Of all the avenues open to me which will enable me to do the most good in the world? This was the problem which revolved in the mind of the boy as he worked in the hay field or traveled the unfrequented mountain trails.

One morning when the farm work was in full swing, the group of workers had halted for breakfast, a letter was delivered into the hands of David. He opened it with much curiosity as he sat in his place in the circle around the camp fire. It was written by a committee which had been appointed over in the town to get up a big celebration for the fourth of July, and David was apprised that he had been chosen for the orator of the day. With only

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

two days for preparation, and these to be filled out with the most arduous toil from daylight till dark, there was not much chance to make the necessary preparation. But David was glad of this opportunity, for none of his kindred or acquaintances of that part had known anything of the struggle he had made to develop in public speaking. With some degree of trepidation he confronted the big audience as the master of ceremonies announced the oration by the honorable David——. He seemed to have a flash of inspiration, and acquitted himself much to his own astonishment and satisfaction, and to the approval of his auditors as judged by their demonstrations.

Over the years there comes down to the recollection of David only the closing fragment of that speech. All the rest of it has gone into oblivion. But the peroration is one of those detached crystals of thought which maintain their form and lustre, while all else has vanished by the dissolving process of the years. To him this is an indicator of the context, and it has for him the same interest that all our early efforts at composition and oratory have for all of us. It brings back the emotion of that palpitating morning when he was mouthpiece for the patriotic sentiment which filled the air. It ran on this wise :

“May we each feel that our country’s honor is our



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

own. May these stars and stripes be the insignia of honor and virtue in every clime to which they may be carried. May the national virtue which they represent be perpetuated for all time. And when that angel stands with one foot upon the land and one upon the sea to say that time shall be no more, may he transplant them to the golden shores of eternity."

David went back to his work with a light heart. He divined what actually happened that this speech would be an opening wedge to gain him recognition for the future.

It happened to be the period in his native territory of division on national party lines, and people were eager for information on political principles. That was the period unique in our experience when politics had not degenerated into the blind contention of party before principle. Each citizen was eager to know the truth before making his choice of the party to become affiliated with. One can imagine what a boon it would be to every community if all people were to keep their minds open for the truth in political matters as they do in other things. Your average politician uses the argument which he thinks will win the approval of his auditors and procure votes, with very little regard for the accuracy of his statements. He is no unselfish disseminator of the



## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

truth people require for their guidance. He represents rather the personal ambition of some man or some set of men who are anxious to be elected. The smooth shaved politician from the city makes himself the boon companion of the farmer and the laborer when he is out to procure votes, but when the smoke of election day clears away and the place of personal contact has shifted from the country to the city, his cordial bearing undergoes a great modification.

One must be orthodox in politics if he expects to gain any of the emoluments which pertain to party affiliation. But to be orthodox often means to lose your own freedom of thought. A great conclave of your party meets together at certain stated intervals and formulates the principles for which the party proposes to stand. Some parts of those platforms are honest, and some parts are cunningly drawn for the purpose of catching votes. The platform is handed down to you, the individual member of the party, with the statement implied if not expressed that it contains your thoughts ready made and that you must conform to them or lose your prestige as an advocate of the party. I appeal from such machine-made principles and assert the right of the citizen to individual thought. Party

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

politics is necessary; I am willing to let parties recruit their ranks from those who are willing to surrender private opinion on the party altar and to think as they are told to think.

But we are reverting in memory to that good old day when people were seeking eagerly for the truth in matters political. David had a vivid remembrance of coming over from the village to the town as a stripling boy and seeing his name posted prominently on the posters as the speaker of the evening, while the brass band paraded the streets to gather the crowds together. One can imagine that the sight brought some satisfaction to the maturing youth who had so recently in the same streets been the despised boy.

Temporarily he accepted a position as teacher in the public schools for the winter months to replenish his depleted wallet and to prepare for the next step forward. But to his mind this was never more than a temporary expedient. It was an occupation too trite and commonplace. It was too much dependent on temperament. The field was already too much exploited.

The real teacher with the instinct for his calling is rather a rare individual compared with the hundreds who aspire to that function with the thought gen-

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

erally of the emolument involved or the social standing appertaining. The man who is a dynamic mental force, attracting and holding the attention of his fellows by his magnetism and raising the level of mentality all around him, is certainly a benefactor to his race. If his bent is spiritual and his disposition optimistic and altruistic, his influence carries over to succeeding generations for an indefinite period. But to one such luminary there are hundreds of satellites who are content to follow the prescribed methods and courses, and revolve in their fixed orbits without asking questions. They sell their stock of traditional lore as the grocer sells coil oil and sugar, never thinking of any service other than the cold blooded bargain of so many hours for so many dollars and cents.

Between these two extremes there are all grades of proficiency. Many of the satellites even dare at times to quit their orbit and soar off into space for brief reconnoitres, but they must swing back. They have not the soul to explore new fields or to initiate new methods.

To be one of the real luminaries of the teaching profession would be glorious indeed. But the position is not elective. Such persons are born, not made. The average person would have fifty chances

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

to one against him in this throw of the dice, and anything short of first rank would not be worth while. At least, so thought the boy David as he weighed and considered the probabilities in the case.

Merchants and bankers in the pursuit of their business are cold blooded, calculating folk, and very little of the humane element enters into their transactions. In their way they do good in the world, but the benefits they bestow are only incidental to the great issue of their life, which is to make dividends and become rich.

Lawyers are men of great opportunity so far as personal advantage is concerned, and no doubt many of them have been great benefactors to mankind. But it always seemed to the boy David that the legal profession, as it works out in actual practice, is a perpetual conspiracy against the integrity of the soul. Excuse it as he will, the attorney who goes into a fight to establish the innocence of a man whose hands he knows to be reeking with his brother's blood, or whose chattels he knows to belong to another must compromise his sense of the highest rectitude. And then so much of the attorney's duty consists in ferreting out the faults of his fellow men and sounding them from the housetop! So often he must accuse

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

and throw the energy of his soul into the effort to establish guilt, that he may easily lose sight of the obligation of mercy in his eagerness to establish justice, or he might forget both in his great desire to win the case. Altruism undefiled has rather a hard chance where winning one's case is the criterion of success in life, and where failure is inglorious no matter what the condition of it.

Then it seemed to David that the subject matter of the legal profession lacked that expansile element which is characteristic of the scientific professions. Janus-like it is looking backward instead of forward. Its conclusions are based upon precedents from the dead past. It has none of those great generalizations to offer which have thrilled the world with a *Principia* or a thesis on natural selection. Such research possibilities as it can boast of are among musty parchments which record the conclusions of men of bygone ages.

This objections, I ought to say, were those made by an inexperienced boy, and may be hastily and inconsiderately drawn. He is stating them not as actual facts but as arguments that came up to him in his effort to choose a profession. The years that have since elapsed have brought to his acquaintance many noble men who have risen to eminence and

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

reflected credit on their commonwealth in spite of all the objections to their legal profession.

And David was directed to the medical profession by seeing all around him people in affliction, who were subjected to the most irrational methods of treatment by old women of the villages, or by itinerant quacks who imposed their ignorant deductions with the boldest effrontery. To see those terrible life-and-death struggles which came at times to his native town depending for their issue upon persons who had not the least knowledge of the fundamentals of medical science would have been ludicrous if it had not been so tragic in its consequences. Surely here was an opportunity to apply intelligence and humane effort to a cause which had imperative need of it. The service of the physician and surgeon seemed so direct and imminent in its application and often so immediate in its consequences, and his life seemed to come so close to the life of his patrons, that David saw in it an opportunity for the play of all those fine-spun ideas of altruism he had dreamed about.

It is true that the other side of the picture came up before him. He saw all the shams and frauds that are put forth in the name of medical science. He saw the opportunity too often taken advantage

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

of by unscrupulous persons to impose unreasonable burdens of compensation upon confiding patrons, and the odium which fixes itself on the whole profession as a result of it. These considerations seemed so weighty at one time as almost to overwhelm him. But a careful weighing of the problem convinced him that the medical profession could make a man everything or nothing. Its opportunities are not comparative but superlative in either direction. He believed he had character enough to place him in the class that should choose the better part. After all it is the altruistic motive which makes any profession or calling in life glorious. If we do things because we love people, our pleasure in doing them will augment as we grow in capability to render more and better service, and our satisfaction in life will expand as we grow, and even the tedious and disagreeable parts of our profession will cease to be irritating when love is the motive which impels us onward. But if we develop the mercenary outlook on life and measure out so much cold blooded work for so many dollars and cents, we may get some satisfaction in building up a big reserve, we may feel some of the social and political power which is inherent in money, but we shall never know the exaltation of mind that comes from rendering ser-



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

vice for the sake of love, and receiving the grateful homage of those we have served.

And in the medical profession David thought he saw an opportunity to come near to his fellow man. It seemed to offer an outlet for the love he felt toward all people. It seemed to have in it the possibility of work with the altruistic motive. And so he made his choice and began preparing for the eastward migration to take a college course.

There is one chapter in the life of every normal individual which demands consideration, and cannot reasonably be excluded. That is the chapter which deals with the dawn of the emotions, and the welling up in the soul of those impulses which have for their ultimate object the selection of affinities, and the linking together in pairs of all such as are willing to be amenable to the great law of nature manifest in the instinct of the perpetuation of the race.

It is the great aggregate romance of nature that human beings should be born of opposite sexes, each the complement mentally and physically of the other, and be endowed with those instincts and impulses which draw them together. For the law of love is as imperative as the law of gravitation, and quite as inexorable in its demands. There never was a human being, normal or abnormal, who did not re-



## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

spond in some measure to this great law. The veriest fag ends of humanity seem to seek their affinities and find mutual satisfaction in their choice. But when the great impulse of nature takes hold of people of intellect and soul, it means more than instinct, more than physical desire, more than social obligation; it means a new heaven and a new earth—an inspiration of poetry, of music, of valor, and of all the higher possibilities of life. It weaves itself like a golden thread through the whole fabric of history, and insinuates itself with emphasis into the highest pinnacles of attainment. It nerves the arm of the warrior, it inspires the genius of the artist, it whispers mellifluous cadences into the ears of the poet, it touches with its magic power the humblest life, and adorns it with thoughts of grandeur and nobility.

And David experienced the welling up of his emotions at a very early age though his provincial setting and his awkward person were barriers which marked his limitations.

There is a certain grim humor now in the recollection of some of the rebuffs he received as they come over the years and throw themselves upon the screen of memory as ludicrous chapters of his biography to be read in lighter vein and interspersed

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

among the serious affairs of life. His untutored imagination saw paragons of perfection in the girls of his native town, and when his horizon expanded with the advent of high school days he was completely over-awed by the aggregate charms of fine femininity.

The ancient custom of representing Cupid as a blind god was not founded on fancy but on actual fact. Twenty years with all their changes have demonstrated that the abandon of infatuation known to sentimental youth was founded upon the imagination pure and simple. Time has played havoc with the girls of twenty years ago. The peach bloom has faded from their cheeks, and the frosts of the years have sifted themselves among the glossy tresses. Weariness and insipidity have supplanted the buoyancy that once made them the charm of the ballroom, and the life of the social evening. The martyrdom of motherhood has extracted everything from their life of those elements that used to give the electric thrill and drive men to madness. In lieu of those it has placed upon their brow the crown of resignation and enshrined them as the patron saints of countless family altars. We would not if we could reverse the process. The way of nature was wise, that they should be withdrawn from the

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

lists of the competitors for male preferment, and sequestered in the dominion of our home. It is the violation of this law of nature which casts its shadow over the moral tone of our highest civilization. But that superlative hour of the emotions was necessary in its time and place. It is the nascent state of social molecules in which they are forming combinations of the more stable texture which fixed society demands.

David entered the lists as contestant for one of the prizes of the neighboring town, with much dismay and many forebodings. The good young men of the community who were the social leaders had so many advantages over him that he hardly dared to hope for success. They were necks and necks ahead of him in the race.

The hopes and fears of those days of suspense are only amusing memories now, but they were terrible realities then; for David was intensive in his nature, and entered into everything with all the fervor of his soul. At the first and second laps he was defeated, and each time his case seemed hopeless. Back at the farm he took refuge in the old time audible resolve that some day she would comprehend the meaning of his life, and the realization of the dreams he had for the future. Each time he made a

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

new resolution, that the plan of his life's work should be laid out upon such a large scale that she would be completely overshadowed in the years that were to come.

A temporary truce was again ended by a dramatic return of all his letters, and an ultimatum that seemed final. Some treacherous associate had made a false representation, and she had acted on the impulse of the moment without questioning the validity of the thing reported.

How often in life are we defrauded of friendships which would be priceless assets to us by little misunderstandings which start us off at an angle of separation which widens and widens as the years roll away! The hot impulsive blood of our youth counts nothing of the cost of those dramatic ultimatums which put friends out of our circle forever. God only knows the stories of blighted possibilities, of long drawn regrets, of heart aches unmitigated, which are strewn along the pathway of the years as a result of these impetuous decisions!

To this last and apparently final response David deigned not to make reply. He stood upon his honor and his pride, and felt assured that the years would vindicate him. If she chose to believe a lie without investigation he would never condescend to disabuse

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

her mind. He buried himself in his books and dreamed great dreams for the future. He resolved to imitate the mollusk, which repairs the wound in its armor by filling the gap with pearl. When the winter days hung heavy and the world without was dark and dreary, he found in the seclusion of his room that illumination which comes from within. And when the smile of springtime diffused itself over the earth, the daisy and the buttercup sprang from the green sward, and the bluebird and the swallow returned from the land of the south, he walked forth alone and absorbed the poetry of the hour. So he was happy all the time.

Months rolled away in this resignation. She who had been the subject of his dreams was moving in other circles and receiving the attentions of other young men. But she was not satisfied any more than was he with the situation. A chasm had opened itself between these two sensitive young people, and the pride of neither would bend to the proposal of a way to span it over. They were enemies when they both wished to be friends. Only a foolish sense of pride was holding them asunder.

One evening at the close of a religious service an accident brought them face to face. Then they discovered that they were not enemies but friends. It

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

was a night bright with spangled heavens and a half augmented moon. As they walked together in the commingled starlight and moonlight the burden of their troubles rolled away, and they became happy in the knowledge that each had been laboring under a delusion and that their misgivings of each other were of the imagination, pure and simple, without foundation in fact.

The real emotion of the hour of reconciliation is known only to those of intensive natures. The thunderbolt measures its magnitude by the potential in the two opposing clouds which produce it. The greatest happiness in life often springs out of the greatest misery, and they who have not learned how to suffer can never know the meaning of exultation in its superlative degree. Reconciliation after quarrels is like sunshine after storms. The longer the skies have been overshadowed and the elements disturbed, the more keen our appreciation of the rift which lets the sunbeam through. And when the great blue vault is swept clean of all its blotches and spreads its azure canopy unsullied above us, our thrill of delight is intensified by remembrance of the dense storm clouds which erstwhile obscured it.

The reconciliation was absolute and final. Henceforth David held the fort against all competitors.

## SATELLITES AND LUMINARIES

The dream world of youth has passed away. The problems of life have been met and solved together. The friends of bygone days are scattered like autumn leaves before the wind, but the vow of constancy which grew out of those troubled days of doubt has remained in force unchanged while everything else has changed about it.

## CHAPTER X

### THE YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

**A**N unexpected event in the family to which David belonged had anticipated by one year the possibility of his advent to college. A letter from his father brought with it from over the ocean the crystallization of all his hopes and dreams.

David was to arrange his affairs for the eastern migration, and the early autumn was fixed upon for the time of his departure. Only they who have gone through a like experience can appreciate the peculiar ecstasy that comes into the mind of an ambitious boy when he sees all the barriers swept away which have obstructed his pathway, and beholds the doors of the temple of learning swing its portals wide ajar to receive him. The days of the interim were full of happy thoughts, and the nights of happy dreams.

Of the trip made alone to the East David has many amusing recollections. He was an inexperienced boy, and withal an inexperienced traveler. Everything he encountered he looked upon with wonder and amazement.



## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

He had heard much of the professional crooks who infest the highways of travel and flourish in the great cities, and he looked upon every stranger with eyes of suspicion. So he held on grimly to his pocketbook whenever he came near to anybody. When he had ended the first railroad division, and had to change cars for the next one, he encountered a phase of travel he had not before heard of. In the towns and cities of his native state, the railroads had never demanded that you show your ticket before getting on the train. There one's first contact with railroad officials was not until the train was well under way and the conductor came round to punch the tickets.

In the darkness of one evening David alighted from the incoming train, and regaled himself at the lunch counter, and took his baggage in hand to secure a seat on the outgoing train.

"Let me see your ticket," was demanded in a firm voice by an individual standing at the portal of entrance.

David said to himself, "Now, this is one of the fellows I have heard about. He wants to get my ticket and disappear and leave me in the lurch. So he said. "No I will not give you my ticket."

The amused official said, "I guess you will before you get on this train."

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

And David said, "We will see about it." After going the full length of the train and finding every door of every car locked he was obliged to come sneaking back and hand his ticket to the suspicious character whom he now recognized as a regularly commissioned employe of the railroad. It was for once a satisfaction to know that he was all alone and that there was nobody he ever expected to see again to witness his chagrin.

On a detour through the south land he saw for the first time the great cotton plantations with their groups of colored laborers bending over the task of gathering the snow white balls of that staple product to be baled and shipped to northern factories. One dark evening on the Tennessee River he saw also for the first time a real steamboat in action. It was a double decker, and its bright lights illuminated the placid water of the river and the green wall of overhanging branches which fringed its shores. To one who had never before seen navigable water, this huge aquatic vehicle was a sight most thrilling.

Of the thoughts and emotions that came to the inexperienced boy in his first contact with the great cities he has a vivid recollection. The glitter of the lighted streets, the towering buildings, and the still higher monuments; the great surging sea of hu-

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

manity which springs forth with the dawn to inundate the streets, and recoils with the darkness to sequester itself in the seclusion of hovels or mansions; the wreckage of human beings left behind like driftwood on the pavements, without shelter, without food, without friends to comfort them; the ghouls which haunt the back alleys and wallow like swine among the garbage cans and ash piles, the halt and the lame and the blind, whose importunity is the daily admonition for charity—these all were bewilderingly new to the boy. One's heart grows sick at the thought of what ought to be done for relief and of one's limited ability to do it. The occasional coin he can afford to bestow is like a drop of water added to the ocean.

The great areas of tenement houses where people fester and rot with filth and disease are a blot on our civilization. When our national government learns to take as much care of its citizens as it does of its sick hogs and sheep, we shall have taken a great stride forward. The spots of dry rot which our cities contribute to the social map are appreciated in their full significance only by provincial recruits who have seen man as an ally of nature develop into physical perfection and moral stability.

To this boy with his chaste unsullied thoughts

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

which were the heritage of his rural extraction, the sight of vice and crime stalking forth without restraint was most shocking. His life was pure and spotless as the great blue dome which arched above him. For the message of the forest and the wilderness to the unsophisticated mind is one of unconditional chastity. Nature, when free to act, implants the dreams of angels in her children, and sends them forth with abiding confidence in the fidelity of others. Society is the antithesis of all these angel dreams. The city is a conspiracy against the honor of every man or woman who temporarily or permanently enters within its precincts. That does not mean that the majority go wrong, but it does mean that people who are reared in cities and have not the regenerating influence of the contact of nature in their life must needs compensate for it by putting forth more character to offset the seductive influences they find themselves subjected to.

And here is where religious training plays its most important role. How often do we see splendid young men and young women, unsophisticated in their minds, pure as angels in their thoughts, go into the terrible maelstrom we call the city and be lost to the world forever! No sadder chapter of human experience could ever be written than that which records

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

the advent of inexperienced young men and young women from the country into the life of the city. The accusing angel must blush as he flies up to heaven's chancery with the word; the recording angel must often blot the record with tears of pity.

To his early religious training, and the high ideals of honor and of moral duty instilled into his mind by parents and spiritual advisers David accorded his full measure of obligation. He felt himself proof against temptation at all times and in all places. He saw weaklings lapsing from grace on every hand—young promising lives smitten by the blight of vice and crime, bright eyes and beaming countenances blurred by the inward consciousness of having fallen, while he was able to walk the royal way unscathed, thanks to the traditions of his people and the admonition of parents who had fortified him for the siege.

It is a strange paradox that in our college courses we give out information on almost every phase of human life, except the one vital thing which is most significant of all in its bearing on individual happiness and social well being. We teach our students all about the physical and social conditions of the barbarians of Thibet and Timbuctoo, but never a word about the great laws of their own life and the transcendency of moral obligation. Daily, as phy-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

sicians, we meet men who are versed in Latin and Greek and calculus and the classics, who are still on the level of the savage in their moral conceptions and who are paying the penalty for their benighted condition by days of suffering and nights of remorse with the consciousness of loathsome disease gnawing at their vitals, and making them a menace to the generation in which they live, and to the third and fourth generation that is to follow after them. Considering its present bearing and its far reaching effect the phase of ethics which deals with moral purity should be exalted to a prominent place in the curriculum. The contention implied, and not infrequently expressed, that civilized men are permitted by social custom to descend to the level of savages in their moral obligations is a blot on our boasted civilization. The ignorance that still obtains of sex hygiene among our so-called educated classes is a reflection on our whole system of education.

To follow a medical student through all the variable experiences of his course would be tedious work and without profit to compensate for the task. So we will get him fairly launched and leave him to his fate, until he emerges at the end where they turn out the finished product.

The boy from the farm finds himself confronted

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

with strange experiences on his first advent into the medical college. Full of all that zeal and intensive spirit which the new recruit brings from his rural setting, David eagerly pushed forward at an early hour to occupy one of the front seat in the operating theatre. On the morning's program came first two didactic lectures which were full of interest because of the strange subject matter they embraced. Then the huge double doors of the hospital swung open and an ambulating table was rolled in, upon which was placed the writhing, bleeding form of a man who had been liberally ripped up with a circular saw. Surgeons in white gowns soon came in and began removing some limbs and doing a patchwork of repair on the others.

David felt a sensation creeping over him which he had never felt before. It would be disgraceful to faint in the presence of two hundred students, ready to scoff and jeer at the least intimation of it. But how to avoid it was a perplexing question. By dint of determined will power he continued to hold up his head. The aspirations of his life, however, were for the time being completely in abeyance. If ever he got out of that operating room alive, he thought, he would pack up his trunk and pull for home.

The first contact with the dissecting rooms was a



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

most revolting experience. To see human bodies, in part or in whole, handled as we handle merchandise, carved up like butcher's meat, stowed away like junk in a curiosity shop, or pickled in vats for future use, seemed such an antithesis of the old biblical doctrine of man in the image of his Creator that the mind of inexperience had hard work to harmonize the authority of the scripture with the practices of modern times.

It required but a few days of actual experience to become adapted to all the strange conditions of a medical student's life. David found himself fixed in the laboratories and dissecting rooms with a fascination which grew in intensity as the months rolled away.

Those were the twilight days of asepsis, and many of the leading surgeons were still contending about the role of bacteria in surgical fever and infected wounds. Naturally there were many infections and many fatalities. The last twenty years have shown a greater revolution in the science of surgery than in any other science, and the changes continue to come so swiftly that one is soon left in the rear if he does not visit often the great centers. It has become a beneficial factor in our social system, rescuing many unfortunates from the clutches of death



## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

and restoring happiness and health to lives that have known suffering and discouragement.

We can with profit skip over the routine work of a medical student's life, though many of his experiences were novel and dramatic. There were days of depression and days of exultation. There were duties that were pleasant and satisfactory, and there were duties that required courage and fortitude in their execution. Suffice it to say that a day came after long-drawn struggles and worries when the students all sat with bated breath while a registrar read from a lengthy paper the names of the successful and of the unsuccessful candidates for the doctor's degree, and David's name was enumerated with the list of those who had passed with credit.

After a few days of relaxation and rest he settled down to apply himself to the clinics, and direct his energies to the more intricate problems of his chosen profession.

But a great trial came into his life. In the pursuit of his duties among the sick and afflicted he contracted a disease which brought him near to death's door and left him a physical wreck. There was nothing left to him but to give up his high ambitions for the time being and return to his mountain home. This he did as soon as he had regained himself far

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

enough to travel. The meeting with kindred and friends was pleasant enough after his long absence, though it was a great disappointment to be obliged to return so soon.

Each section of this great earth has its charms for certain people, but the one hallowed spot to all of us is the place of our nativity. The soil that was mingled with our childish tears is sacred to us forever afterward, and our minds turn instinctively back to it as the needle points to the pole. David indulged the full emotion of the home coming as he saw the contour of his native hills loom over the horizon. A few weeks of repose at the old farm again brought back the color to his cheek, and his mental batteries soon became recharged and ready for action.

The conditions which confronted the beginning physician of twenty years ago in the country towns were rather discouraging, though they had their compensating features in the development of initiative and resourcefulness, which followed as a regular sequence as the bright outline of a picture develops out of the dull negative. The man who has always done his operative work amidst the environment of first class hospitals with well-trained assistants, would find himself greatly at a loss if he

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

were called to operate in some meagre private home without help and where everything had to be improvised for the occasion.

The technique of twenty years ago, although based upon the aseptic, or rather the antiseptic plan, was still far from perfection. In the hospitals men were playing to the galleries with a bizarre display of all the colors of the rainbow in their permanganate of potash and oxalic acid and bichloride of mercury. The supreme importance of simple soap and water had not been appreciated. Instead of trying to make the exclusion of bacteria absolute, surgeons were content to permit a few to enter their wounds and then try to kill them off with antiseptic drugs.

The country physician of twenty years ago was like a light upon a hill. If he had a fatality in his practice it was heralded far and wide in every direction. In the country where everybody knows everybody else, the news of a mischance travels like electricity. But in the city where we hardly know our next door neighbor, no such notoriety attaches to the cases we fail to cure.

Twenty years ago in our country towns the physician had to fight his way against the prejudices of the people. His advent into their communities was an innovation which many were inclined to look

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

upon with suspicion. To the minds of many he seemed to be in league with the powers of evil and when necessity came, they called him in grudgingly with the thought that they were capitulating to some sinister power which they would gladly avoid if possible. The ignorance of the old women of the village was a sufficient guarantee that they were not in league with the Devil. But the young physician who could boast of a knowledge of anatomy and pathology, and gave a reasonable explanation of disease from the material standpoint enjoyed no such exemption. Many times he was called in at the last moment when everything else had failed, and his reputation had to suffer not from his own lack of information, but from the superstitious dread of his patrons.

The country physician had a hard and sometimes a thankless lot. At any and all hours of the night he was called to brave the storms of winter and travel over roads which were difficult and dangerous. Often he had many nights in succession without sleep, and with such food only as he could procure from the poor farm houses and ranches that flanked his way. In rickety old houses where the wind howled through the crevices he often spent his nights, and faced problems alone which tested his

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

nerve to the utmost. Not infrequently he made long journeys through many hardships, paying his hotel bills and livery bills by the way, and receiving for compensation only the promise of a worthless wretch who never paid him and never intended to pay.

Some there were who were unkind and never appreciated the service he rendered. Sometimes he was blamed and severely censured for things over which he had no control, and he had to endure the imputation of having motives in his life which he never dreamed of. Sometimes they laughed to scorn his altruistic visions.

But there was a positive side to this picture which furnished ample compensation to balance the account with a goodly margin of satisfaction besides. The love and respect of those who did comprehend and appreciate was expressed with just as much emphasis as was the disapproval of his enemies. Almost daily the mails brought boxes of flowers and other tokens of the good will of his patrons, and these things have more of the real substance of compensation in them than anything else in the world.

Money, though a necessary reward for our service, is but dross compared with the uncoined specie of the human heart we call appreciation. What a thing

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

it is to have people believe in you! The best, the highest motives of our life are invoked by the faith of others. We strive above all things to maintain ourselves upon the pedestal where we are placed by our friends. The criminal at the bar of justice winces not at the verdict which consigns him to the gallows or to a life of ignominy behind prison bars, but the announcement of his crime in the daily paper where all his friends may read about it is the thing that cuts him to the quick. The opinion of our fellow man is the greatest of all the incentives in life. It is the force back of the soldier when he risks his life amidst the hail of bullets; it is the impulse back of the explorer when he penetrates the wilds of trackless continents or faces the untold hardships of the frigid polar regions; it is the great all-pervading background of our whole system of ethics, holding people with its iron grasp to the line of duty in spite of their weakness and in defiance of their temptation. It demands concessions from the miser whose yellow gold is more vital to him than the red blood of his veins. Before its all-powerful spell, selfishness bends, pride condescends, and the whole rank and file of humanity lifts itself to a higher altruistic level.

And the physician above all people is influenced

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

by the attitude of approval or disapproval of his patrons. The one who expects him to do so much cold-blooded work for so many dollars and cents, and comes to him with fears and reservations, appeals only to the mercenary side of his life, and will be treated with the same motive which the grocer has when he gives honest weight and measure because of the expediency of being honest. But the one who comes to the physician in a spirit of absolute surrender and says, "I lay the burden of my life at your feet, I have unbounded confidence; give forth only the word and I shall obey," is the one who makes a bid for the sum total of his manhood, and no sacrifice is too great to compensate such confidence. It is to such that the profession of physician owes its dignity and its exaltation.

There is a certain crudeness about the mind of one who speaks of his surgeon as a butcher, and jests about his physician filling untimely graves, which the author of these papers can never tolerate. The butcher, in the harshest, most unscientific way, severs vital tissues for the express purpose of destroying life, while the surgeon, with a minute knowledge of anatomy which has cost part of his very life to acquire, makes the necessary readjustments of our body with a precision that is born of the full con-



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

sciousness of the sacredness of that life before God, resolving each time to do his utmost to preserve and not destroy that which has been entrusted to his care. The physician who has the instinct of his calling enters into the real spirit of every bedside tragedy that confronts him, making common cause with all those who are hanging breathless on the issue. He exults with them in the hour of victory and mingles his tears with theirs in the hour of defeat. He is willing to endure every hardship that his patrons may have the full measure of his potency, and that his conscience may be satisfied that in the work of each day he has met loyally the sacred confidence which was imposed in him and done his full duty. I am painfully aware of the fact that physicians and surgeons are not invariably men of the class here indicated. There are unscrupulous men in all professions. The urgency of the need of sick people for help gives opportunity for the man without a conscience to take advantage of the confidence too easily imposed in him. Human vultures there are in all departments of life—men who delight in the importunities of their fellow men for the advantage it offers.

But I speak of the rank and file of the profession, and class them without hesitation as men with an



## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

altruistic motive, and many of them as real philanthropists. They are not as a rule, sounding a trumpet when they do charitable things, but untold thousands of people of each generation can bear testimony to their devotion to the cause of the poor and the needy. Boorhave, the greatest physician of the late mediæval period, used to say, "I like to treat poor people, for God is their paymaster." In the great cities of Europe are individual men who number their charity patients by the thousands, and they are moving in the even tenor of their way, and rendering this colossal service with hearts full of love and compassion.

Like all other people, the men of the medical profession have to bear the odium of the unsavory name of the worst element of their calling. The penumbra around the borders of the real domain of medical science is peopled by a motley group of mountebanks and frauds and pretenders who are weaving spider webs of all sizes and descriptions to entangle the unwary and victimize the over-credulous multitude.

Knowing the psychology of bold assertion, they are indulging in the most extravagant claims, and professing with brazen-faced effrontery to do things which are plainly impossible. Their name is legion, and in each succeeding generation they put forth a

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

new front to meet the popular demand for delusion. Though they group themselves together into many diverse cults, they have one motive which is common to them all—the substitution of actual knowledge of medicine and surgery by some absurd theory of the nature and cause of disease.

It is a wonderful thing in this world of ours that there is such a multitude of people who seek darkness rather than light, and who cleave to error rather than truth. The medical profession at all times and in all places has been beset by delusions which have often been so gross and palpable as to call in question the sanity of the multitudes who have believed in them. Ancient errors have cast their shadow far into the daylight of modern times. From the cure of scrofula by the king's touch, which is less than a century old, through the fallacy of Perkins' tractors, and the imaginary power of infinitesimal divisions of medicines, down to the negation of all diseases by the Christian Science cult, we have a chain of delusions which connects us up with the chimeras of the middle ages. In all other departments of life superstition runs its course and comes to its natural ending. But in medical matters, the delusion, when it meets with stern facts, instead of capitulating, simply shifts its base, puts on a new front and goes on

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

as if nothing had happened. The king's touch is no more, Perkins' tractors have gone by the way, homeopathy is weak and tottering, but Christian Science is flourishing with more vigor than any of them, and embracing in its fold not only the vulgar and ignorant, but the educated and refined.

As a counter balance against all this delusional phase of our great profession and the disgusting spectacle of people being duped and imposed upon, there is great satisfaction in the wonderful strides medicine and especially surgery is making. Twenty years have meant a revolution in this science and art. Old theories have been so rapidly submerged in the rising tide of enlightenment that it is hard to keep one's balance. The light of the modern day has penetrated so many dark recesses that one wonders if any great problem will remain unsolved. Twenty years ago we were in the twilight of our knowledge of bacteriology and its relationship to disease. There were men of eminent standing who would not accept the germ theory, and who always contended against it to the day of their death.

Twenty years ago antiseptic surgery was still the dominating thing and the carbolic acid spray which poisoned surgeon and patient alike was still in evidence. The author of these papers has a vivid

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

memory of seeing operators in frock suits handling alternately the bones of the skeleton and the instruments with which he was about to cleave them on the living subject as he disported himself in hilarious dissertations before the admiring throng of medical students who never failed to be present at the surgical clinic. In those days some bold surgeons ventured to open the abdominal cavity, and worked with bated breath to get out of it as quickly as possible, leaving always behind drainage tubes to be subjected to suction at stated intervals, in the hope that by this means peritonitis would be averted.

The great world-wide controversy over appendicitis has been mostly within the last twenty years. The graphic combination of symptoms which the trained surgeon of the present day can interpret over the telephone as the certain indicators of that ubiquitous malady, were variously believed to be the symptoms of four or five different imaginary diseases. The surgeon when confronted with the classic symptom complex which the laity of this day have learned to interpret, could take his choice between typhlitis, paratyphlitis, perityphlitis and appendicitis. Early operation was unheard of. Always the surgeon waited for an abscess to form before he thought of interfering, and the mortality of that dreaded disease

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

was appalling. It is no wonder that people insisted on making their will before being operated on for appendicitis. The issue very frequently vindicated the wisdom of that extreme precaution. At the present day the only great worry is that the case will be delayed into the dangerous period. Early operation in skillful hands is almost always successful. To American surgery is due the credit for this great victory.

Twenty years ago the operation for goitre was such a formidable thing that only the boldest surgeons would undertake it, and the mortality was appalling. At the present time the most critical cases of that fearful malady are so skillfully managed by the well trained surgeon that patients are rescued from their peril with comparatively little danger.

Twenty years ago the human stomach was one terra incognita from the surgeon's viewpoint. Ulcer and cancer of the stomach were permitted to run their dreaded course unchallenged. The author of these papers has a vivid picture in his memory of the agonizing symptoms which an ulcer of this important organ produces.

My father was afflicted with it for many years, and finally died as a result of its complications. Nobody even knew in that day what was the matter

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

with him, though the clinical picture as it comes down in memory was so clean cut and precise that there could be no question of its meaning. He lived almost to the time of surgical relief and passed out just in the twilight hour of stomach surgery. Ten years later he could easily have been cured by an operation which would have involved very little risk. If I could but turn the dial hand of time backward twenty years and render to him who had done so much for me the relief which surgical science of this day and age could easily bestow, it would be one of the greatest satisfactions of my life.

Cancer of the stomach is attacked in these days the same as cancer of any other organ. In its early stages, the outlook after thorough removal is better than it is when the involvement is of any other vital organ. Armed with his full array of sterilized linen and rubber gloves, the surgeon invades abdominal and brain cavities with little fear of consequences. He boldly attacks the prostrate gland and removes it instead of consigning its victims to certain death, as was the case twenty years ago.

Diphtheria at that time had a mortality of forty to fifty per cent, and sometimes whole families of children were swept away by its ravishes. With the aid of the modern antitoxine it is so robbed of its terror

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

that people no longer fear it. The only trouble the physician of this day has, is to make people believe afterward that they really had diphtheria. They are cured so quickly that they are left in doubt as to the correctness of the diagnosis.

Twenty years ago the physician used to delight in giving huge doses of medicine, often compounding half a dozen remedies into the same prescription, expecting in that way to meet each individual symptom the patient complained of and offset them all at once by the appropriate antidote. To make these polyvalent mixtures palatable was considered to be an art worthy of much attention.

To-day we have learned that almost all of the acute infections are self-limited and will cure themselves if we but give nature a chance to assert itself. The Creator has provided in our bodies the means of our own cure. Whenever a poison, whether chemical or bacterial comes into our system, the body cells begin forthwith to manufacture the antidote of it, and as soon as they produce enough antidote to neutralize all the poison present, we get well. The symptoms of disease are the manifestations of a poison that the disease germs are pouring into our blood. The fever and pain and loss of appetite are indicators of the amount of poison we are receiving,



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

and of our individual resistance to it. The body cells throw themselves with great energy into the task of manufacturing the particular antidote required, and when they have produced enough of it to neutralize all the poison present, we reach the crisis of the disease and begin to recover. Sometimes, as in acute pneumonia, the crisis comes suddenly, when the whole picture is changed in a few hours from one of great distress and danger to one of comfort and perfect safety. Sometimes the end is not so dramatic, but the struggle between invading bacteria and the cells of the body is drawn out through many days, and often through many weeks, and, when the issue is finally decided, the patient is left a wreck of his former self, requiring months to regenerate his depleted tissues.

But every case of acute infection involves the same antagonistic issue between poison-producing bacteria which have established their colonies somewhere in the body, and the defensive tissue cells which engage themselves in a life-and-death struggle to neutralize the poison which would otherwise destroy them.

And it is the recognition of this great law of nature which has completely changed our attitude toward disease and pointed out the way of the future development of medical science. We no longer im-



## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

agine that we keep antidotes corked up in bottles on the apothecaries' shelves, but we realize that we must get in league with nature, make our efforts to accelerate her processes, and prevent them from being impeded.

In some diseases, such as diphtheria and hydrophobia and tetanus, science has penetrated into the domain of nature's laboratory, and learned some of her processes, but she had been loath to give up her secrets. Acquired immunity has offered many baffling problems, but the encroachment upon it which each year of determined effort is making, augurs well for the future. We know that each self-limited infection involves the same process of antidote-production. We know that there is a great law of self-preservation established by the Creator in our bodies, to work automatically whenever danger impends. Each acute infection lasts a variable period, until this law has a chance to assert itself, when it recedes and leaves behind only the depleted vitality which resulted from the struggle. We know, furthermore, that the antidote which nature produces to cure the acute infection becomes in general a fixed quantity which prevents us from acquiring the same disease in the future.

Along some lines we have been able to unravel a

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

part of the mystery of acquired immunity. We have discovered segments of the circle, which some day in the future are to be joined together in perfect symmetry. The medical profession at the present juncture is sadly in need of one of those generalizing intellects which have appeared so often in the world of science, to group all the fragments of accumulated knowledge into a system and initiate a new epoch.

The last half century and particularly the last twenty years have produced such splendid results that we have all hope for the future. The practical application of Listerism, Roentgen rays, antitoxine, and the enormous development of technique which has lifted surgery into the domain of the exact sciences, are but the accumulated daily bulletins of the last twenty years. The one great burning question of the hour, which has proved itself more stubborn than all the rest, is that of the explanation of cancer. Not even a glimmer of light has come from this dark field of research.

But we are digressing too far. We are to go back to the position of the country doctor of twenty years ago.

He was obliged to do such operating as he did do in private homes, utilizing the domestic furniture for his equipment. The table he placed his patient

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

on was often the one which served as dining table for the family. The cooking utensils were variously employed to sterilize his instruments and dressings. Often, he had to stand in the way like the angel with the flaming sword before the garden of Eden, to prevent his multitudinous lay visitors from soiling his linen or contaminating his instruments. As many people as could pack into the room would crowd in and the windows were darkened by the heads of inquisitive spectators. Not infrequently one and sometimes a number of these people would fall in a faint while the operation was in progress. Denied the help of trained nurses or assistants, the country doctor had to utilize his neighbors as best he could to render such assistance as was imperatively demanded during the progress of his operation. To have one farmer giving the anæsthetic, and another, scrubbed up and dressed with a mother-hubbard apron, to hand him his instruments and hold retractors, was an experience common to the rural practitioner of twenty years ago. A surgeon who has since risen to eminence told me of an occasion when he was amputating a leg under circumstances of this kind. In the midst of the procedure it was announced that the roof of the house was on fire. Whereupon the doctor divided his forces and sent

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

part of his farmer allies to extinguish the flames, while he with the rest of them went on with the operation. In spite of dust and smoke and cinders, and the questionable asepsis of the hands of men who had done only the hard work of the farm, the wound healed well and the patient made a good recovery.

I wish to pay my tribute of respect to the good people who came to our assistance in these emergencies. It is surprising how much common sense there is in the make-up of the average individual of the laboring classes when we take pains to call it into action. The denizen of the city who imagines that there is no refinement and no soul outside of his urban precincts has but a limited outlook on life. Take from him the thin veneer of polish which comes from the attrition of social contact, and he bears no comparison with his brother who has been tutored in the school of nature, and had his instincts developed along wholesome lines. The fine abandon with which these people take up the cause of their neighbors when in affliction, and enter into the real tragedy of their life, making all kinds of sacrifices when occasion demands it, without thought of compensation or reward, reflects a spirit of fraternalism which is unknown to the wealthy classes generally or to the residents of cities. When the phy-

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

sician had to make a journey, in those days, to reach his patient or was obliged to render continuous service for some hours in a household, the good matron would put herself to great inconvenience to provide him with the best food and the most comfortable quarters her home could furnish. But in the cities the physician is called in much as the plumber or the carpenter is called. He is expected to look out for his own entertainment. And if his service continues beyond the breakfast hour he indulges in a fast day until his task is ended. Our social methods of the city boast of much more refinement, but they do not always bring the greatest amount of comfort possible into our lives. Each phase of life has its compensations. If we draw the balance we may find that there is not so much difference in the sum total of advantages in the country and in the city as we might imagine.

The country physician of twenty years ago was, as a rule, the only practitioner in his respective town. He had nobody to share his worries and responsibilities with, and nobody to join him in consultation when his cases were perplexing and difficult. The author of these papers has vivid recollections of times when he felt that the burdens of the world were upon him. How often he looked up at the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

great red cliff that flanked his native town, and weighed his life with all its anxieties against the record of this stupendous book of time until he seemed but a mote in the sunbeam, and his worries and perplexities but momentary incidents in the great world process. The æons were a consolation to his troubled soul, and the untold centuries shed their mantle of peace upon him.

The country physician naturally entered into all the social and political activities of his community, and lived the real life of the people he associated with. When he was unwise enough to take a strong partisan stand, and announce himself with too much emphasis against the party which opposed him, it made a division in his patronage and alienated many whose loyalty would have continued to be a great advantage. The physician who depends on all creeds and parties for his patronage has no more business mixing in partisan strife than has the prominent church man, who cannot afford to have his flock divided against him.

The physician who really became a moving force in a community naturally met with that opposition which obstructs the way of all those who do things. If you are content to be a dead-head and do a treadmill business forever, you can be assured of the con-

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

solation that nobody will oppose you or say hard things about you. But whenever you begin to move out of the pace which has been set by the average citizen, you will produce friction, and the more rapid your strides, the greater will be the opposition you will encounter. The meteor which has come to rest upon the mountain side is cool and opaque as the country boulders which lie all around it. But when it was in action in its transit from the sidereal depths to the earth's surface, the resistance it encountered in ether and atmosphere were sufficient to raise its temperature to the point of incandescence. When one develops philosophy enough to comprehend that the opposition of his fellows is but the working out of a sociological law which is common to all times and all places and all people, he will cease to think of his opponents as deliberate persecutors. That very resistance which society collectively, and some individuals particularly, are throwing in your way will do more to develop your initiative and bring out the latent elements of your soul than any other one thing in the world. Thank God, then, for the obstructionist. He is an asset which comparatively few of the rank and file of society have the privilege of claiming as an individual possession. He and his kind are the negative of a picture from which is to be



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

produced the clean-cut outlines of your personality one day in the future—of that personality which is not described in terms of form or color, but in the aggregate of all those soul characteristics which enter into the make-up of a God-like man.

We are all prone to think too seriously of the hard things that are said of us. When a man is working with all conscience and making untold sacrifices for his patrons and his friends, it seems such a wicked thing that people should put evil into his life that he has never dreamed of, and impute motives to him which are known only to people of the basest kind. But when he rises to the philosophical view-point and comprehends that the very people who say those things do not believe them, but are attempting in this way to fill in the gap with some measure of plausibility between your success and their failure, the whole thing has a different significance. We are advertised much more by our enemies than by our friends. If you shake the tree you scatter its seeds abroad. From the darkest cloud springs the most vivid gleams of the forked lightning, as from the darkest picture of calumny comes forth the elements of human character which indicate the Divinity of our pedigree.

The lives of Martin Luther, of Savonarola, and



## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

of Jesus of Nazareth were all intensified by the dense negative which was produced by their detractors. We would not have known the Sermon on the Mount if it had not come as the antithesis of the lives of those who traduced its author.

It is said that physicians, and especially country physicians, are prone to develop alcoholism and the drug addictions. I believe there is some measure of truth in this, and perhaps some measure of justification, when we consider the hardships they have to endure and the disappointments which are incident to their lives. In all walks of life, rectitude is but a relative thing. No human being ever lives the life in actual practice which he holds in his consciousness as the ideal. But when we pass in judgment upon a man's virtues we do not stop to think of the temptations he has resisted. We expect him to walk faultless where we ourselves might falter.

Temptation was placed in the world that we might grow strong by resisting it. And they who develop the greatest strength are they who have known the greatest temptation. Do not think that you have known virtue until you have walked the ragged edge of fate and seen hell yawning at the bottom. When you feel your feet secure far back from the precipice, you appreciate the poise and the renewed

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

strength which that agonizing hour brought into your life. The palsied virtue of disuse is not virtue at all. It is like the palsied muscle which fails us on the first occasion when its strength is required to meet some emergency. Not in passive indifference, but in real life-and-death struggles, does nature deal out her admonitions which make us grow strong and valiant. Everything in this world is balanced against its antithesis. If we covet the big things in life, and desire to possess the attributes of character which stand not in a passive but in an active relationship to the world's great problems, we must be willing to pay the price which God has set upon them. The mere drifter may get some of the satisfaction which comes by the pull of gravity that directs him always to a lower level, but only to him who is willing to stem the current and ascend by force the rugged channel of the river will open up the vista of the sublime heights where all things have their source.

An account of the experiences of the successful country doctor and the conditions and problems he had to meet is an epitome of the life of him whose fortunes we have been following. David sounded the depths and shoals of human experience. He knew the exultation of victory; he knew the depression of defeat. In the hard school of experience he

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

was tutored. Sometimes his disappointment was so great that he felt that all was lost and that he must acknowledge failure. Sometimes in hours of victory he felt as though the world was at his feet. He made his mistakes as people always have done since father Adam was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit. He knew agonizing hours of trial and temptation and disappointment.

How little we think when we meet people in the ordinary walks of life and observe only the agreeable surface play of their personality, which society demands and which business relationships make imperative, how deep the tragedy may be that is going on within and how terrible the struggle that hides itself away behind a smiling countenance. But I would rather live with my foot on the hot iron half the time and feel that for the rest of it I was doing the deeds of a real man, than to slide along in ease and comfort and indifference to the world without rising to its opportunities, without feeling the exultation of its victories.

Our David believed that one of the most essential elements of success is to go straight to the heart of things, and deal with the main issue first and consider the preliminaries and the prefaces afterward. He always took time by the forelock and got on the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

ground when there was something doing. He moved with all the celerity possible to meet every event of his life and rendered quick decisions when emergencies came.

Sometimes your swift-moving general will run into the ambush of the enemy, and sometimes he will sunder his phalanx by the very celerity of his movements. The effect of quick action, barring accidents, is in general dual. It increases the enthusiasm of the attacking party, and it overawes the party which is put on the defensive. We cannot afford, of course, to be reckless of our armament and equipment, but when all things are in readiness we should strike with all the speed and all the force we possess if we expect to win victories.

For many long years the highways and the byways of his native section knew well by day and by night the rumble of the swift-moving vehicle of our country doctor friend. Separated from the profession of the city by a distance so great that its aid was difficult to procure, he was obliged to undertake many things which would otherwise have gone into more experienced hands. The training in technique and method which resulted were to have a far-reaching influence over his life in the after years when he was to enter into competition with the men

## YEARS THAT BRING WISDOM

in the city. He grasped the flying moments to regale himself on such advances in his profession as the journals and the new editions of medical and surgical authors brought to him. He traveled in his native land and in foreign countries for purposes of study as often as his moderate finances would permit. Twice he came home from these trips for study utterly penniless.

He took an active part in all the social and political affairs of the locality where he resided. He knew the advantage of the loyal support and abiding confidence of many friends whose fealty he has never had occasion to doubt; he knew the bitterness of a few enemies whose vindictive hatred saw evil motives in everything he tried to accomplish. No lukewarm allegiance ever falls to the lot of men of action. They are loved by their friends and hated by their enemies.

One beautiful summer morning he stood upon the elevated slope of the mountain side which flanked his native town, and looked out over the rough dusty roads which lead away in every direction. He thought of all the hardships he had endured and the struggles he had made. A new thought came to him. He said to himself, "It is finished. This chapter has come to its logical ending, henceforth my compe-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

tition is to be with the men of the city." The plan of his transition to this new theatre of action took tangible form, and was soon carried into execution.

Of the new world that opened up to him immediately with the change; of all the successes professional, financial and social which resulted from it; of successful competition with men who had stood prominent in his chosen pursuit but little need be said. Some day in the future this theme may be amplified.

Presently we shall call the roll of the old familiar group who played the game of chance, after which we shall permit our David to make his exit in a short soliloquy which marks the ending of this little book.

## CHAPTER XI

### ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

**A**T a very early age David had come up against the so-called conflict between religion and science, and all through high school and college, and for the many busy years which succeeded them, his mind had been much occupied with the problems involved in this most interesting of all controversies. He felt at first that it was sinful to allow himself to think of such things, because the best reputed people of the little circle in which he moved said that it was dangerous to call in question any of the fixed religious opinions, or to speculate in any way outside of the crystallized forms of thought involved in dogmatic religion.

A riper mentality has convinced him that there is a good measure of truth in their contention, and that many men have made shipwreck of all faith and have foundered on the rocks of modern speculation.

But how could one stop the clicking of this terrible mental escapement which God had started in motion? The most momentous of all the problems

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

involved in this mundane existence is that which pertains to the hope of immortality. Without that hope all is vain and of no lasting consequence. Why then should any human being be denied the right to think about it, to weigh evidence pro and con, and to look into every man's theory in search of the truth. Where all other lines of thought are evolving and developing why should our religious thought be stationary?

Between the extreme position of the ultra-religious man, who held to the absolute letter of scripture and predicted perdition for all who dared to veer in the least degree from the well defined outlines of traditional thought, and the so-called scientific man, who scoffed at all forms and ridiculed all creeds, there was little consolation to be found by the honest plodder, who did not wish to break away from the old moorings, but who wished to keep an open mind ever ready for the truth.

Thanks to the liberalizing process of the years there is no longer manifest that hard and clean-cut line between these two classes of people that there used to be. Both parties have conceded, and we have now a compromise position in which we dare to speak our ultimate conviction without running the risk of social ostracism on one side, or being set



## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

down as mentally weak on the other side. We have learned the great lesson of toleration. God never made two leaves alike, nor two blades of grass of the same pattern; and He never made two human beings of exactly the same mentality. We must have liberty to think or we can never progress. And David has fought out in silence during all these years many problems involved in this momentous question. Some degree of stability seems to have come to him, and the grounds upon which it rests will be put forth as the following excursion into the domain of life's philosophy.

Away out in space there, as far as the eye of man aided by the modern miracles of optics can penetrate, we perceive the presence of inexorable law. In the minutest living organism, visible only by being magnified a thousand times, the same regular, inevitable conditions are manifest. Law, order, everywhere law and order, which operates with such precision that its processes can be computed for millions of years in the future to the hair's breadth of time and space. The planets revolve in their fixed orbits with unvarying exactness. The great sidereal clockwork never jumps a cog. The oceans, though sometimes stirred into fury by the passing storms are yet true to the law of gravitation and never transcend

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

the dead line which the continents have raised against them. The valleys, the everlasting hills, though shaken oftentimes with the earthquake, or excoriated by the fierce storm, are yet true to the contour which nature imposed upon them when they arose from the slime of the mighty deep. The seasons come and go in regular sequence, measuring off time as with an escapement, which is inexorable in its exactness.

The universe with all its component parts is but the working out of a great foreordained system of law. Not a molecule can escape its Omnipotent grasp. The instinct of the bee makes it the messenger of love for the flower and the collector of ambrosial food for man. The flower breathes its perfume into the air to attract the bee and spreads its gaudy petals in the summer sun in display of the love message it has to send to its kindred flower. True to its peculiar instinct it fulfills its own life's functions through the assistance that it bestows on others. The same interdependence is everywhere manifest in nature. No single thing could exist apart from the great aggregate that goes to make up the universe. The systole and diastole of the life current on our great mother Earth brings seedtime and harvest. The plant inhales the gas that is poison

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

to the animal and converts it into forces that are indispensable to animal life. All things are made subservient to the animal and plant life, which came upon the earth in due process of time to appropriate the forces that were designed for its service from before the beginning of time.

And what is this thing we call life that has taken possession of the universe and laid all things under tribute to itself? Is it some occult force, born of the mysteries of chemistry and liberated in the nascent state of molecules? Is it the music of the æolean harp which vibrates with the passing breeze and ceases when the harp becomes unstrung? Or is it an entity superimposed upon all the dead forces of nature, and utilizing them in the working out of its vital functions? The answer to this most pertinent question we may be pardoned for passing up for a while, until we shall have discussed some of the minor problems leading up to it.

We may ask ourselves, first, Does the life of man differ from the life of the animal and the life of the plant? and, if so, is the difference in the quality or the quantity of the life element? Whatever our explanation, I can think only of a common genesis for all living things. Whether by a special act of Providence or by a graduated process with a million-year

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

measuring tape to compute the length of it, we must agree that it is all a part of the one great plan, and that the same general laws are manifest in its elaboration. Think how many things we have in common with the animals. Anatomically they possess potentially every organ we possess. They have lungs to breathe with, they have stomach and intestines to digest with, the eye of both is identical in its mechanism, the ear, the heart, the blood vessels, the plan of the integument. The peculiarity of arrangement of the bones of the limbs, with one long bone extending from the trunk to its articulation with two parallel smaller bones, which in turn articulate with five separate digits is a type that embraces the world of vertebrates from man at the head of the kingdom through every form of animal which has a backbone, even to the fowls that fly in the air and the whales that swim in the mighty deep. Bones, muscles, nerves, connective tissue, joints, glands, membranes, are identical. The digestive juices are chemically the same, and the brain though differing in form and size is yet constructed on the same principle. The instincts we possess and many of our mental processes are variously manifested by different animal species. The special senses are in general more acute with them than with us. I think we must

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

agree, then, that the life of the animal is essentially the same kind of life as the life of man.

The identity of plant and animal life is not so strikingly apparent, and yet the same microscopic cellular structure, and the same vital processes are manifestly demonstrable, even in the lowest type of vegetable life. Down at the lowest vital levels it is a matter of some difficulty to decide sometimes whether particular organisms should be classified as plants or animals. The plant which draws its sustenance directly from the soil seems to be the intermediary between the chaos of dead matter and the more highly organized forms. The plant breathes, and its life blood circulates. It is nature's first great chemist, which builds up the molecular formulas for the higher types of life.

Down at the basis of things there must be a generalization of the life principle, and its source must be the same for all organized forms. When you force air through one aperture of a flute, you get a high-pitch note, and when you force it through another you get a low-pitch note; but it is all the same kind of atmosphere. So with the life principle. Organic forms from the moneron to the man are intelligent just to the extent that their physical being can focus the intelligence of God from the universe.

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

If we accept the theory of evolution, which seems to have at least a good background of evidence, the correlation of the various forms of life is at once apparent. The great Soul of the Universe, Spirit of God, or whatever you choose to call it, is elaborating a plan, which manifests life in an ever ascending scale as the ages roll away, and the inferior forms are but the by-product turned to use in the economy of nature.

Scientists tell us that the developing embryo repeats in its evolving life of a few months the whole series of changes that have figured in the organic world from the beginning. At first a single-celled organism, then a fish with gills, then a batracian, then a mammal, then a man. The whole drama of philogeny is enacted in miniature, and nature recapitulates her developments to date in the embryonic life of each individual. It is as if the Creator in the beginning worked with the simplest forms, and gradually pushed out new brain lobes for increased intelligence, and better mechanical contrivances in the anatomy with each succeeding epoch of time, keeping always the story of His work to date in evidence and manifesting it anew in each individual life.

The different superimposed formations of the

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

earth's crust show a succession of organic forms, both vegetable and animal, which have been gradually evolving from elementary types to the more complex and more highly organized species which culminate in the present epoch, but which will no doubt be subject to the same variations in the future as in the past.

Thus we behold that a great plan is in progress. The whole universe is laid under tribute to these passing forms of life. They are the one thing for which all other things are created. Force and matter are immutable in their action and counteraction. Life only is the changeable thing. Can we imagine such a great interdependent scheme, involving as it does the whole cosmic process, being the blind work of chance? In every aspect of it there is the indication of an intelligent, purposeful force back of it.

The materialist is driven to a sorry plight when he asserts that the vital processes are but the manifestation of chemical reaction. He has learned a few of the very elementary chemical laws, and has seen glimpses of the wonderful phenomena of physiology, but the great occult processes of chemistry and physiology will forever baffle his efforts. The miracle that goes on within the fragile shell of an egg transcends all human understanding. The mind



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of man stands hopeless before the puzzle. The few facts which go to make up the science of chemistry and the fewer which go to make up the science of physiology are like the fossil shells we pick up on the seashore, but the great abyss from whence they came will forever conceal its great generalizations under fathomless depths. And yet men will presume with these few elementary facts in their hands to say that chemism is life and that life is chemism.

Millions of years ago the Creator foresaw that man would come; and that he would require heat and light and mechanical force greater than the ordinary processes of nature could furnish, and the sunbeams that fell wasting on the face of that primeval world were trapped by the coal fern, and stored away as the force that held the molecules of fixed carbon in the coal seams of the earth. There was no use for this stored energy for untold millions of years during which the seashores were submerged and buried and then elevated into the mountain heights. Then man made his advent and began to wrest his birthright from the crude face of nature. Who of sane mind shall call this the work of blind force? Much more is the God-power necessary with this conception of things, than with the empirical world of special providences. The individual may



## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

well be left to his own shift in such a stupendous plan.

And whither is it leading us, and whence came it out of the chaos of the past? Time had no beginning and will have no end. Has all the eternity of the past been wasted, and is this the first rehearsal of the great drama of life? Or are we not in an eternal process as myriads before have been, and as myriads to come are yet to be? Is there not some grand climacteric act, some final product in which the work of God shall be consummated? We have evolved so far, and learned to appropriate so much of the omniscience and omnipotence of God. Why should we stop now before we have reached the final goal?

If I should assert something I cannot prove I would be open to the charge of speculating. Yet why should I not speculate on the meaning of the great cosmic process if I desire to do so? Am I doing any more than the man who propounds the nebular hypothesis, or the man who divides matter into molecules and atoms. The basis of all our knowledge of cosmic phenomena is hypothesis, which may one day prove to be incorrect. The scientific world will permit me to indulge with impunity in speculation so long as I do not transcend

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

certain materialistic boundary lines which have been mapped out. Of matter and force I may speculate with propriety, but when I bring a third element into my conjecture, and project a hypothesis with spirit as the central figure, I am treading on dangerous ground, and need beware that I am unbuckling my armor and exposing myself to the shafts of ridicule. If I write in the potential mood I shall escape the burden of proving what I say, and my guess may be as near the mark as any other's.

From comparative anatomy, from embryology, and from paleontology the evolution theory seems to substantiate well its claims as an explanation of the genesis of the organic world. If it be true that there has been an evolution of physical forms in an ever ascending scale, with man as the final product to date, why not an evolution of spiritual entities to correspond? In all the ages that are past this physical being of mine was mingled in chaos with the world of matter. The calcium and the iron and the phosphorous of which it is composed were a part of the great unorganized aggregate of these substances. But there came a time when it was my happy lot to be differentiated and selected from chaos to become an individual. By a mysterious biological process which I cannot understand this

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

selection was made, and I who before was chaos am now a living, breathing individual form. This is manifestly and evidently true of the physical man.

But what about the spiritual complement of man? Where in all the ages past has been the spiritual entity that inhabits this body and manifests its mental processes and emotions through it? Somewhere, organized and selected or unorganized and chaotic, it has existed for all time. Does it not seem reasonable that the individualizing process has been true of the spiritual ego as well as of the physical ego? From the aggregate of unorganized spirit an individual was separated henceforth to exist as an independent life, to assume responsibilities of its own, and to move amid the marvels of the universe. And if there has been an evolution of physical forms, why not a corresponding evolution of spiritual entities in the same ascending scale?

I think there is at least the essence of plausibility in such a theory, and we may assume that it explains the cosmic process as we see it past and present in the various phases of its evolution. We may well ask ourselves, What about the future? where is this stupendous process of organization leading to? and what is its outcome to be?

There is a vague suggestion that harks back to the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

dawn of the history of man and runs through the various phases of human conjecture from the beginning, that what God is man may become. The ancient Greeks and Romans deified their rulers, the mediæval enthusiast deified his saints, and peopled the empyrean with celestialized personages to whom he directed his worship. The greatest, most satisfying thought that religion ever gave to the world is this very one: "What God is man may become." We each have the potentialities of God within us in an undeveloped state. The purpose of all our experiences is to develop the God-faculties we possess and enable us to approximate ever nearer the omniscience of Deity. Experience is the only thing that develops intellect, and intellect in perfection is the only thing that distinguishes God from inferior beings.

If I am not to retain this individuality in the future, why has God made this gigantic effort from the beginning of time to differentiate me from chaos? To each of us the most vital and important of all things is life—individual, self-conscious life. The universe is nothing to me unless I can live. Is God going to be so inconsistent with himself as to destroy and take away that for which the universe has put forth such effort? Is he going to repeal the law of

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

life which He permitted to be written in the code of Creation? Will the Creator wanton with us, and build beautiful forms as the child builds block houses simply for the pleasure of knocking them to pieces again? Or is there not something real and earnest and tangible in this world of ours?

Are you then antropomorphist? Yes. Are you polytheist? Yes. I am anything and everything that sees perfecton in the plan of God and Divinity in the possibilities of man. Do you hold the old conception of the great man God with flaming eyes and smoking nostrils? No. What then is your conception of Deity? My conception of God, in part, is the great indwelling life principle of this world, which manifests itself in the undeviating laws of nature. What relationship then does this hold to the perfected man who is said to be in the image of God? When man becomes perfected he will be entirely in unison with God, and being governed by the constant laws of the universe, he will be but an individualized unit of the universal. When a solution of sodium chloride is permitted to remain at rest, it precipitates from its substance beautiful crystals, which have all the physical and chemical properties of the mother solution. They are simply individualized parts of the whole, obeying all the chemical laws, and fulfil-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

ling all the physical conditions of the amorphous solution that produced them.

It may be that we bear to the great universal life some such relationship as this: We move and breathe in the midst of the menstroom that has precipitated us. Our specialize intelligence is a unit of the universal mind. We vibrate with the emotions of the great Over Soul. As Emerson says, we are the rivulets that manifest the pulsations of the great surging sea of life. Struggling and contending as we are for position and individual advantage, with a mind and will that appear to be wholly our own, there is an undertow that moves us unconsciously. Let each man look over the experiences of his life and see if there were not times when the plane of the great universal mind intersected with the plane of his individual mind, and somehow, somewhere he could realize that destiny was leading him, that God was directing him.

These are the moments of the fine abandon of the poet when he cuts adrift from conventional thought and sails on the sea of emotion. These are the times of the ultimatum of the patriot when he says, "Give me liberty or give me death." These are the times when we choose each of us unconsciously a way unfrequented by

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

others, unexplored except by the great universal mind which directs us toward some unknown goal where we find peace and satisfaction.

It may be that we bear to the great universal life some such relationship as the single cells in the animal organism bear to the whole complex structure. One particular cell secretes bile and stores glycogen. It seems to exist for no other purpose. And yet it has a life-history which is uniform and complete in all cells of its kind. The brain cell, with its prolongations, receives and transmits the impulses of the soul within, and is mechanically adapted for that very thing. And yet each cell of nervous tissue is a vital entity; the method of its birth, the method of absorbing its nutriment and getting rid of its excrement and the method of its dissolution are all fixed. It seems to have a life history of its own, quite apart from its relationship to the greater life of the animal to which it belongs. It seems not improbable that we, in fulfilling the functions of our individual life, are fulfilling also the functions of the great universal life.

There is much satisfaction to my mind in these hypothetical thoughts. I am not the mere accidental product of some ungoverned power, which produces life and leaves the vitalized clay to the caprice



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of other ungoverned forces to deal with wantonly and wastefully I am holding down this outpost of God's universe. I am a sentinel entrusted with a duty, which it is wisdom for my own sake that I fulfill, for when I fail of my duty to the universal life, I detract from the advantages of my individual life.

The human body as a machine is well-nigh perfect. The defects that appear in our anatomy and physiology and that make demand for the service of the physician and the surgeon are altogether accidental. They are variations from the dominant type. Perfect physiology resulting from perfect anatomy is the heritage of each of us.

If the advocate of materialism and chance creation will but turn his attention dispassionately to the human body as a mechanical contrivance, he will see unmistakable evidences of an adaptation of means to ends that could have resulted only from intelligent forethought.

One of the difficulties which the early makers of microscopes came up against was chromatic aberration. When light was brought to a focus, a halo of rainbow colors played about the object in the field and obscured vision. A study of the human eye revealed the fact that the different refracting media



## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

are composed of lenses of different degrees of hardness, and when microscopes were fashioned after it by having their lenses made of different qualities of glass in alternation, the difficulty of chromatic aberration disappeared entirely.

We must agree, I think, that the great organizing intelligence which stands back of the organic world was cognizant not only of the ordinary laws of optics, but of the very defects in those laws which needed special arrangements for their correction. Can we imagine this to be the work of chance? The human ear has a mechanical contrivance of small articulated bones and a delicate vibrating membrane connected with the organ of Corti, which is like the keyboard of a piano, tuned to all degrees of pitch and timber and connected by means of the auditory nerve with the cortex of the brain above, where the sound waves are interpreted as uttered words, or as musical notes or other significant sounds, and stored away for future reference. Could we with the greatest stretch of our imagination look upon this most wonderful of all auditory contrivances, the human ear, as the work of chance?

When an artery is severed, one would naturally expect the district to which it was distributed to die for lack of nutriment. But a study of anatomy

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

reveals the fact that small collateral arteries connect up every segment of the larger arteries with the segments above and below it, so that the circulation is carried on right past the break as if nothing had happened. The blood itself carries in solution a substance which causes it to coagulate into clots whenever it gets outside of the unbroken intima of the vessels which contain it.

Whenever an artery is severed by accident or design the inner coats of it have a property of contracting and drawing themselves into the open lumen where they act as a plug to stop the hemorrhage. Thus we see that in the circulation of the blood not only the ordinary events of that mysterious process have been provided for, but the very accidents to which each individual in his life's experience must be subjected, have been forestalled and the means of escape provided.

Many years ago my attention was directed to the healing of wounds. I asked myself how it was that some wounds heal quickly, while others are slow and indefinite in their time of resolution. Take, for example, the so-called condition of proud flesh or exuberant ulcer. The old text-book explanation of this common phenomenon is that the circulation is poor and that the anatomical part does not receive

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

enough nutriment. That this is an incorrect conclusion is easily proved by the fact that such an ulcer bleeds profusely at the least touch. There is abundance of blood, and the tissue cells are produced in such profusion that they fill the wound with granulations which rise above the level of the adjacent skin. Why, then, does the ulcer not heal? If we were going to repair a breach in the wall, bricks and mortar would be necessary, but an intelligent use of the materials would be imperative. If we simply dumped them down in the gap and went our way, conditions would be no better than before. But when the intelligent mason lays the brick up in order and adjusts the cement between them, the repair may be so perfect that one could hardly distinguish the difference between it and the normal wall.

Just so in the healing of wounds and ulcers. Not only are cells and blood necessary, but an intelligent direction of the process of repair, so that nerve shall unite with nerve and muscle with muscle, etc.

Unconsciously to us there exists in the body a monitor of repair, which has the function of preserving the body in perfect symmetry and physiological exactness. Hypothetically we can locate this regulator and director of the healing process in a center

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

of the cortex of the brain. Just as a certain district of this marvelous gray surface layer is set apart to regulate the circulation, and another to regulate the breathing function, we can imagine that another district is set apart to control the healing process. But back of the hypothetical material center we must imagine the soul, which, when it enters the body, must carry with it the plan and specifications of its earthly tabernacle all drawn up and chartered. The framework, the coverings and adornments, and the internal mechanism of life are all adjusted to each other with finest precision. To maintain for the specified time of three score and ten years, more or less, this perfect equilibrium and symmetry of parts, is an obligation accepted from the Creator as a sacred duty.

The working of this soul-function becomes very apparent under certain conditions. When an injury from within or from without perforates stomach or intestine, escape of the contained fluid, laden as it is with bacteria, would mean speedy development of peritonitis and death. But observe the intelligent manner in which this emergency is met by the physiological processes. Immediately the rectus muscle becomes rigid as a board to hold everything perfectly still, because the motion of breathing

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

would spread the poisonous fluid. The great omentum throws its protecting arms round about and adjusts itself with precision on all sides of the breach to hold the diseased process within as small a compass as possible; the peritoneum throws out plastic lymph to glue together adjacent surfaces, and prevent the spread of the gravitating fluid. The blood responds with a great increase of its white corpuscles, which are the defensive warriors of the body, and these are forwarded with great speed to the scene of conflict. Immediately the patient begins to unload the stomach by vomiting profusely.

One of the physiological puzzles which was most difficult for me to understand in my student days was this very thing. Why should patients with acute abdominal diseases invariably vomit. The explanation which finally came to my mind was this: When the miller discovers that one of the wheels of his machinery is broken he goes straight away to the head of the mill-race and turns off the steam, because he knows that the force it represents will do great damage if it continues to turn the disabled machinery. And so in our physiological processes. The food content of the stomach and intestines would do irreparable injury if it were propelled onward into the damaged segments, and so nature pre-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

vents that by invoking the aid of the emetic center and unloading the stomach of its contained food.

Thus we see in the hour of peril a co-ordination of defensive forces which can have but one explanation. The soul in the body, like the captain at sea, meets the emergencies of its mortal career with expedients born of highest intelligence and executed with vigorous promptitude.

The credulity of the mind which can accept the theory that this incomprehensible human machine is the aggregation of a series of chance circumstances perpetuating only such individuals as happened to be endowed by accident with some variation from the dominant type of his race, and eliminating all others which failed to receive this chance endowment and which admits of no intelligent adaptation of means to ends in the explanation of this most mysterious of all the phenomena of nature, is to my mind comparable with the one who accepts witchcraft and transubstantiation on authority and makes no inquiry about the intrinsic evidence for or against them.

Proving things from authority and the method of making all deductions conform to certain preconceived ideas has by no means been limited to the religious world. In Von Haeckel's great book, "The

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

Riddle of the Universe," after a masterly presentation of all those correlated facts of comparative anatomy, embryology, and paleontology which lead up to the evolution theory, this great apostle of materialism says, "When we follow this process backward from the man to the moneron and deal with its genesis, we must admit that it has its beginning in spontaneous generation of life, because to admit any other explanation would be to admit a miracle."

Von Haekel was well aware of the fact that this matter of the spontaneous generation of life has been a perennial problem among scientific men from ancient times and that whenever it came up for the crucial test in scientific bodies the evidence adduced has been overwhelmingly against it. The fact that maggots develop in decomposing meat was at one time taken as positive evidence of the spontaneous generation of life. But, when Lowenhock proved by screening the meat that the maggot was simply the larval form of the fly, which was hatched out of the eggs previously deposited by that ubiquitous insect, the apostles of spontaneous generation went down in defeat. Then when Henle and Polender and Devaine discovered the world of bacteria and announced the mysteries that were revealed by the microscope, the idea was again revived that life came



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

spontaneously from matter. The advocates of this theory asserted themselves with great emphasis. They said they had been mistaken only in the size of the unit. If you expose to the open air a vessel containing broth or any infusion of organic material, in a few hours millions of bacteria will be swarming in it. This was to them positive proof that bacteria had their origin in dead matter. But when the master mind of Pasteur attacked the problem, he proved beyond all doubt that bacterial organisms are subject to the same law as all other organisms, and can originate only from others of their own kind. The constancy of the law of biogenesis has made possible modern surgical technique and modern conceptions of sanitation.

And so the doctrine of spontaneous generation of life went down before the masterly work of Pasteur to a defeat from which it has never rallied. Whether its advocates will find some new frame-work for their theory or not is a matter which only the future can determine. But it is certain that all the evidence brought forward to date has met with a rebuttal which seems decisive, and spontaneous generation of life rests now only on the basis of sheer conjecture.

With all this data before him, Von Haeckel makes the positive statement that life originated from dead



## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

matter. In taking this position, as he says, to avoid accepting a miracle it seems to me he has to admit the greatest miracle one could well imagine. Lazarus coming forth from the tomb is but an ordinary incident compared with the wholesale animation of dead matter, accepted as a fact by this great sceptic. He is so true to his preconceived idea of monism that he is willing to bend heaven and earth for evidence to prop it up. If there is any difference between this type of mind and that of the religious fanatic, I fail to comprehend it. They are of the same breed, and the manifestation of their perverted mentality differs only as a result of the wrong tangent each has got started on.

Has the human machine in its mechanism a means of communication with God?

This is the pertinent question that comes down to us from every epoch of the history of man. Let us set aside all traditional thoughts and methods, and examine the matter from the purely rational standpoint.

Physiologists are all agreed that the origin of all the impulses of life is in the pyramidal cells which go to make up the gray rind of the brain. All our life processes seem to proceed from this incomprehensible thin stratum which covers the hemispheres of the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

brain. Do all the impulses which these brain cells send out come from within, or do they not receive and transmit impulses from an extraneous source?

The sending station of a wireless telegraphy system has antennae which go high in the air. When the apparatus is in operation the antennae give off Hertzian waves which radiate in every direction. They palpitate upon the intangible ether, and pass over mountains and valleys and oceans in their onward migration. They have no message to deliver to any object encountered by the way, until they come to another station which is tuned to vibrate in unison with them, a hundred or a thousand miles away. As soon as they impinge upon an apparatus which has been constructed to take up the amplitude of their vibration, they deliver up the intelligent message which they convey. The mountain and the valley and the ocean over which they have traversed received no intimation of the swift speeding message, because they could not take up the amplitude of its vibration. To them it appeared as if nothing had happened, though the cypher dispatch bore record of the fall of an empire or the discovery of a new world.

The part of the human machine we call the *cortex* of the brain is not only a sending but a receiving station for mental impulses. Electricity is but one

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

phase of the great universal force which manifests like properties in all its mutations. It is the red ray of the sunbeam that vibrates from the rose, while all the more rapid vibrations pass idly by its gorgeous petals. The Aeolian harp takes music from the breeze by its power of selecting its affinity of vibration from the commingled melody.

Just so in the world of psychology. From the great central mind of the universe emanates intelligence which permeates all space. In the midst of this inundation each organic form is hung like the aeolian harp to select its affinity and manifest to the world such of the great universal mind as it can focus. I am aware in a way of the omniscience of God, but I am capable of manifesting only a part of His knowledge. I am a poorly constructed harp. But there are some chords in me that vibrate true, and of this much of the will of God I am an interpreter to my fellow men.

There is no creature so mean in all this great universe but has something of the Divine message to reveal. The most beautiful of all the organic forms I have ever seen is the jelly fish of the Californian seas, which is not much more intelligent than the slime of the ocean of which it is constructed. Not a glimmer of mentality does it manifest as it sways with the

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

restless waves; and yet it has a message of symmetry and blended colors which no artist could approximate.

The instincts of animals are but their manifestation of the great universal mind which finds in their brain cells a means of making itself known to the world. The duckling which is hatched in the hen's nest knows from the first that it is an aquatic animal, and rushes to the water at the first opportunity. The rodent tribe are aware of the succession of the seasons and lay up in summer their winter's supply. Among the ants and the birds and the bees we perceive a purposeful method of life which seems often to be directed by the highest intelligence. All this we may designate the universal revelation of God to His creatures, before which we all stand equal according to our several ability.

I am moving in the same flood of light as the crab which goes sidewise and the serpent that crawls on the earth. They draw from the same source as I such intelligence as they can manifest in their simple life functions. They are, as I, the rivulets that throb before the surging sea of life. And if they receive less of the Divine energy than I, it is because their organization can appropriate less of the passing impulses.

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

The different degrees of intelligence among men have a physical basis. The Great Spirit manifests itself through brain cells, and the higher the organization the nearer we come to absolute knowledge.

The world's history shows that many of the great discoveries have been announced by two or more individuals almost simultaneously, though they were not associated in any way in their research, nor acquainted with each other's work. What does this mean? The Great Over Soul possesses all knowledge of all things, and is ever ready to reveal any part of that knowledge to whosoever prepares himself to receive it. As soon as these brain cells of ours are trained to vibrate in unison with any part of the great universal mind, we shall receive the message we are prepared to receive. When two or more individuals, by a process of mental training or of special endowment, are prepared to receive a special message, they will see the light, while the multitude will be oblivious of its presence. And this to my mind is the basis of what we call revelation, so far as it concerns the average man.

That there are physical types, one higher than the other in the great organic scale we admit without question. That there are individuals of the same type especially endowed must be apparent to all at

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

a glance. The terms prophet, poet, philosopher are our abstract expressions of this preference of nature for some of her sons. It must needs be that we have oracles to express to us the mandates of the Divine mind, in order that we ourselves may learn to prophesy and draw ever nearer to the omniscience of God. I am bathed in, I am inundated by the great universal flood of intelligence; but it may be still and motionless around me, until some current is started by the bark of another as it passes me by. We wait as the mariners of old for the moving of the winds that we ourselves may spread our sails and begin the onward migration. To the one who stirs the pool of Bethesda we give all honor, and we hesitate not to rush into the vortex he has created.

I am a humble plodder, proud only of the one desire to move onward and upward. I am willing to bow my head and do obeisance when the prophets come, be they scientific, aesthetic, or religious. I have exulted in the achievements of science, I have wept in the presence of great pictures, I have worshiped at the shrine of Christ. I go through the world with skylight and sidelights open, eager to appropriate every ray of light that comes to me from God above and the sons of God around me.

It is my humble hope that by learning thoroughly

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

the way of subordination I shall develop by degrees the power to co-ordinate with the great creative energy of the universe. If I develop my talents I shall not be merely passive in the cosmic drama, but shall become an active, constructive force helping onward the program of progression to the extent of my ability. To my mind in this matter of mental rapport there is a full explanation of the appearance of those peculiar individuals who have come among us at various times and places in the world's history, and established new systems of religion or breathed the breath of life into the old ones by the boldness of their assertions and the earnestness of their protest against conventional thought.

They are the voice from the wilderness which cries repentance to each succeeding generation. They are the minds which by special endowment are developed along the lines of spiritual discernment. Jesus of Nazareth, the most wonderful among the children of men, was the highest type of this class of individual. His spiritual philosophy stands in a class by itself compared with that of all other philosophers and teachers. His sermon on the Mount embraces the principles of the veritable kingdom of God. Impractical as many of them are considered in our existing social systems, and with mankind as



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

they are at the present time, they penetrate the veil of the empyrian, and establish the rule of God in His kingdom. Surely they were the product of a brain in tune with the infinite!

What shall I say of the canonical miracles with which Jesus is accredited? Is there any ground for reconciling them with our ideas of the fixed laws of the universe?

My first observation is that the records of them may not be exact. Evidently the story of Jesus was held for some considerable time as oral tradition and subjected to the modifications which must creep into many told tales. Four different evangelists wrote the history of Jesus. While they agree in general upon the basic facts, there are enough variations in the different narratives to indicate that they all drew from a source that was subject to modification. The story of blind Bartimeus, the story of Peter's denial, and the story of the fate of Judas are all a little different. How often do we observe in the relation of the same contemporary events by different individuals similar discrepancies!

Our oldest biblical manuscripts do not approach the Christian era within several generations of men. How do we know that the ancient transcriptions and the modern translations are correct? No doubt



## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

they have been imperfect in their execution although safeguarded by all the methods of painstaking scholars. Interpolations have crept into the text; idioms have been robbed of their meaning, thoughts have gone into the new language in a modified form. Quite possibly some things recorded as miracles have been exaggerated by repetition.

With these sources of error we can see that it is absurd to hold to the literal phraseology of the scripture as the exact word of Deity. Its inspiration is in the spirit of the men who wrote it and not in the dead letter which has come down to us through all the generations of men who have given it their bias and handed it onward.

Is there anything in the experiences of the present generation of men that would make probable the miracles of healing attributed to Jesus? I answer with emphasis, Yes! Again I go to the human machine for an explanation of psychological and physiological phenomena that have in different times and places been regarded as miracles. And indeed if we define a miracle as an event contrary to the traditional ideas of things, or an event which transcends our understanding, they were and are miracles.

In the human body there is one set of nerves

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

both motor and sensory which come down through the spinal cord from the brain to be distributed to voluntary muscles and integument and bones and ligaments, etc., all of which are under the dominion of the conscious mind and subject to a greater or less degree to volitional control from above. Then there is another set of nerves called the sympathetic which are distributed to the involuntary muscles of the blood vessels, and the stomach and intestine, and all other structures whose function is not under the control of the will nor actuated by the conscious mind.

This sympathetic system connects up with the sub-conscious part of the brain where centres have been established to control the distribution of blood, the peristalsis of bowel, and all those nutritional processes which can be performed automatically. If we had to think every time the heart is to beat, or every time the lungs are to be inflated, we should use up all our mental energy in the processes of our own physiology, and life would be to no purpose. Nature has wisely removed the regulation of these vegetative functions from the domain of the conscious mind that we might without impediment pursue thoughts which have no bearing on the processes of our own body. The higher ideation of intelligent

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

beings would be impossible without this mechanism which keeps most of our physiological processes submerged beneath the level of volitional cerebration.

The peculiar thing about this sub-conscious stratum of mind is that it is amenable to suggestion both from within and from without. The degree of susceptibility varies greatly in different individuals, but doubtless, all people are subject to it in some degree. No doubt, as has been already suggested, there is in this subconscious mind a center that governs the repair of tissues and supervises the laying down of cells for that purpose. We can imagine that the ordinary process of repair could be greatly accelerated by a powerful mental suggestion, just as the contractor who is building you a house could respond to a rush order by multiplying his forces and putting through a three month's job in three weeks. Miraculous healing, from whatever viewpoint we can imagine it, must be an acceleration of the ordinary slow processes of repair.

The human body can heal itself of almost all ailments if we give it time and the proper conditions of environment. A healing power is one of our natural endowments. It is subject to modification by suggestions from within and from without. The principle involved has been the corner stone of some

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

religious creeds, and has written itself into the confession of many others.

It seems not a sacrilege to me to think that Jesus, in His God-like compassion for the affliction of his neighbors and friends, should have invoked a natural law to heal them, though it must have seemed a supernatural manifestation to all those who saw the results of his magic power and did not comprehend the source of it.

Why should we insist that the actions and utterances of prophets should deal with things different from the laws of the universe? Is not God the author of natural law? Some people think the dominion of God ends where natural law begins. They forget the miracle of the blade of grass and of the blushing rose. The most stupendous of all miracles, the beginning of life, they regard as only a natural event. If the transcendency of all comprehension be defined as a miracle, surely this is one great enough to satisfy the definition. We are demanding miracles to prop up our faith in God when all around us they are falling thick and fast.

I am teleologist to the core. I see the province of God in every manifestation of life; in every contrivance of nature for the perpetuation of life. Jesus was a great healer because he had the part of

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

His brain which comprehends the healing power well developed, and could interpret perfectly this part of the great universal intelligence. He was an exponent of the principles of the kingdom of God because he had become completely in tune with the infinite.

As to his supermundane genesis I shall not dispute it, considering how far he transcended all other human beings. We are justified in the belief that nature made some great exception in his behalf, considering what he was and what he did, though I do not believe that he had the God attributes different in kind, but only in degree, from the rest of us. We are all the sons of God and have within us all the attributes of Deity in embryo.

From my childhood I have read and reread the narrative of the administration and the superlative doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth. The simple direct story bears the evidence of truth in its very simplicity. I accept it as essentially correct, though the explanation of it from the modern viewpoint must differ a little from the explanation given by his contemporaries. Considering that the records we have were produced by men with fallible human judgment, we cannot imagine that we have a full and perfect record of all he did and said. Each narrator

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

must of necessity have injected something of his own personality into the story, and interpreted the apparent supermundane occurrences according to his individual bias and according to the prevailing idea of things in that particular age. I accept the actual facts related by each of them and put my own construction on their meaning.

I assert again the absolute right of each individual to freedom of thought in these vital matters. It seems to me that the man who dares not weigh and analyze is the man who lacks faith. He is afraid to trust God for fear that something in the mechanism of the universe will conflict with his fond tradition. He is willing to make God inconsistent with himself that he might cling to the conception that was started thousands of years ago by men of like passions and like imperfections with himself. Religion to my mind is a progressive thing, just as science is progressive. It is preposterous to think that our knowledge of all other things should expand and progress, but that our knowledge of Deity should remain stationary.

The idea of the immaculate conception is not miraculous to me in the face of what modern science has revealed about generation. That the ordinary processes of nature can be modified, and their con-

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

ditions changed is the observation of every worker in biology and every breeder of animals. Jesus was our elder brother because he was a human being with body and parts like the rest of us. He transcended all things human in his spirituality because his brain by natural endowment was attuned to vibrate in unison with a far greater part of the infinite mind. And this is the particular wherein the men we call prophets differ from ordinary people. By special endowment they are attuned to a greater part of that particular phase of the infinite mind which we designate spirituality, and the special service they have rendered to the world is to reveal the things which are spiritual.

In delivering their spiritual message they have sometimes got tangled in the phraseology of it some of the prevailing ideas of cosmic philosophy of the age in which they lived. This was purely accidental. They delivered their message in the written form, sometimes adorned with imagery which was purely metaphorical to them. But the extreme orthodox interpreter of the ages to follow took that message as the word of Deity verbatim and found himself in conflict with the prevailing ideas of the mechanism of the universe, because science had been going forward with colossal strides during all the centuries



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

in which he insisted that religion should remain stationary.

And herein lies the essence of the so-called conflict of religion and science. It has been a conflict over the interpretation of the processes of nature in which the crude conceptions of the less enlightened earlier ages have been placed in opposition to the more enlightened conceptions which have taken advantage of all the progress made by science in the interim, and the real essence of religion has been left entirely out of the controversy. Society in all ages has divided itself into two classes. One clings to the literal wording of old traditions the other accepts the new wine of truth and is willing to dispense with the old bottles of tradition. The message of the prophets should be taken for what it was intended to be, and meanings should not be read into it which were never meant by the author. Surely it is enough that they should enlighten us on spiritual matters, since science ignores all things spiritual.

Good and evil are but the positive and negative phases of universal law. Righteousness is applied knowledge. Vice is applied ignorance. The moral law is as inexorable as the law of gravitation, and he who flies in the face of it will be punished here



## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

and now. Each day is a day of judgment. I am the sum total of my actions to date. The degree of righteousness to which I attain is an indicator of the degree of perfection of my rapport with the great universal mind. If I sin, it is an indication that I am not entirely in tune with the infinite. I cannot be perfect because I am a poorly constructed machine. My mental bearings get out of adjustment sometimes, and I would go forever wrong but for the power within me and the assistance I can get from my fellows to become readjusted. The fact that I can come again into harmony with the Infinite mind is a verification of the wisdom and righteousness of repentance.

I assert myself in a new phase of transcendentalism. The man who takes Milton's *Paradise Lost* as his model of pure English, and uses it to illustrate the perfection of our mother tongue, concerns himself only with the structure of words and sentences and paragraphs and their relationship to one another, and he disregards entirely the subject matter of the world's greatest epic poem which is couched in these terms. The big thought back of Milton's perfect poem is not germane to the purpose of the man who only wishes to deal with his syntax.

And so I find science and so I find dogmatic

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

religion. They are dealing with the minutia of the processes of the universe and the stereotyped forms of God's revelations and forgetting the great correlating purpose which stands back of all of them. I refuse to be held by your technicalities. I project my mind to the bounds of time and space and read the revelation of God first hand from the starry vault and the endless panorama of mundane processes.

I know as well as I know anything that comes to me through my reasoning faculties that this life will not end with the dissolution of the body. That God has put forth such herculean effort to produce men for no other purpose than to live the few years of this mortal probation, is preposterous. The intellect, the soul of man, is too great and noble an achievement to be cast away. Just how the restitution is to come we do not know.

The greatest wonder to me is that there should be any death. In this human machine is inherent the marvelous power of regenerating all of its parts. For the score and more years of adult life before we reach the period of the senile changes, the different tissues of the body are perfectly regenerated, and kept up to full functional efficiency, and we ask ourselves why could not this process of self regeneration go on forever. The wonder is that all life is

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

not eternal. If perfect regeneration of tissues is possible for twenty years, why is it not possible for all time! The mutations we call life and death are wonders beyond my comprehension, but I am sure they are vital parts in the great onward movement of souls. We stand on the brink of the chasm which is swallowing up all things human, and penetrate only with the eye of faith into the mysteries beyond. But the perfect adaptation of means to ends in all the processes of the universe should convince us that the sleep we call death is a needful thing in the great final regeneration just as the sleep which daily interrupts our consciousness is needful in the repair of our tissues. The human machine needs daily repairs, and at the end of the three score or more years of its conflict with sin and its struggle with the forces of nature it needs a great final overhauling and readjusting to prepare it for the next act in the drama.

I know not the method of the final restitution, but I do seem to know that it will come. My faith is not based upon tradition alone, but upon the aggregate of all the phenomena that go to make up life and the adaptation of the universe to its perpetuation. But for the intelligence of man to comprehend it, the beauty and harmony of the universe would have no

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

more significance than if they never had existed.

Life is the one thing for which all other things are created. The philosophers say that force and matter are indestructible. The coal that glows in the grate and warms me while I pen these lines is giving off heat and light which it received millions of years ago when the sunbeams were falling over the jungles of the carboniferous age. These molecules of black carbon have held that same solar energy in latent potentiality while sea bottoms have been elevated into mountain ranges, and millions of generations of animal life have come and gone. When that energy is liberated, it is exactly the same in amount as it was when it went into that latent form. If it is converted by way of steam into mechanical energy, and this in turn converted into electricity, and the electricity reduced to light and heat again, after making allowance for loss by friction, we shall find that we have exactly the same amount of heat and light we started with. Energy may change its form but it is never lost. The coal which has been reduced to ashes has simply changed its chemical form. The pure carbon has united with the oxygen of the air to form carbonic acid gas, while the calcium and other fixed elements have resolved themselves into cinders.

## ON THE ANVIL OF THOUGHT

I think we might, with the same propriety, draw the same conclusion of mental energy and its corollary life. We cannot it is true subject it to the same experiments and computations which we can heat and electricity. But the fact that it so far transcends all other forces that it is the regulator of them all is proof that it is elemental in its nature and perpetual in its duration.

The changes we perceive in the universe are but readjustments. The component elements abide forever. Every turn of the kaleidoscope produces a new symmetrical picture, but the pieces of glass which produce them are always the same.

It is not with the thought of discrediting tradition that these observations have been elaborated. We must all acknowledge the great obligation we are under to those crystallized expressions of faith that come down to us from the ages in the name of scripture. They have kept alive the hope of immortality in the human heart through all the dark days when religion vacillated and science doubted. I write to review the proposition of immortality from another tangent and shall be happy indeed if I have aided in the least degree to arouse interest in the one greatest of all questions, "If a man die shall he live again?"

## CHAPTER XII

### RETROSPECTIVE

**I**T is springtime again. The mantle of green has spread over the hillside and down the valley. The air is full of the fragrance of flowers, and the warblers have returned from the southland. All nature is attired in her richest robes. The sun is pouring its flood of golden glory, this time from the western sky.

Twenty years and more have passed away since that fateful morning in the springtime before, when the group of children who were to figure in the annals of this little volume played the game of chance with the daisy's petals. Twenty years with all their changes have rolled over their heads. The play world became a world of stern facts.

Into the drama of life some entered to play the role of tragedian, and some to play the role of clown, and some to play the role of hero. The kaleidoscope has turned and turned, and now we are to look at the final arrangement.

The processes of nature have known but little

## RETROSPECTIVE

change. The song of the bird is unmodified; the blush of the peach blossom is neither brighter nor duller than it was twenty years ago. But when we look at the people who have witnessed this unchanging panorama of nature for twenty years, we are appalled to note the transformation which has been wrought into their countenance by the fast flying seasons. They were intoxicated then by the dreams of childhood, but they are sobered now by the stern facts of life. We are drifting, slowly drifting, toward the great abyss. We console ourselves with the thought that all mankind are subjected to the same process. The years swept over our heads with such rapidity that we gasp at the thought of them. We look at withered age, palsied and trembling, and wonder what particular form it will assume in our particular case when we arrive at the windrow and are ready to be gathered in. God pity the one who pins his faith and hope to the meagre events of these few fleeing years.

A little hut in the midst of a vacant field, far away from the thoroughfares of the town, still stands as the only indicator of the tragic story of Harriet and Henry. The rafters are tumbling in. The windows and the door have long since been demolished. Weeds have grown rank all about it and almost



## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

submerged its decaying walls. The birds for many years had built their nests under the protecting eaves, but now even they have forsaken it. The meanest creature of the field has disdained it as a home, and left it to the spell of desolation which time invokes upon all ephemeral products of the hand of man.

One of the saddest chapters in life is that which records the dismantling of the old home which protected the family circle we have each belonged to. Into a new vortex each one of us has been hurled, but we are bound to the old eddying center by a thousand sentiments which time can never dissever. The last stroke of dissolution of the family compact is the dismantling of the old home.

In a quiet corner of the country church-yard a meagre little unpolished grave-stone marks the place where our one time winsome little Harriet sleeps the last long sleep and dreams amidst the scenes of her fitful career. Long ago the partner of her afflictions committed an offense against the laws of his country and became a refugee from justice. The numerous children who bore his dishonored name were left to make their way as best they could by the aid of kindred and kindly friends who came to the rescue.

## RETROSPECTIVE

But even the orphan nature has its compensations. The hard struggle for position and place develops initiative, and often proves in the end to be an advantage instead of an encumbrance. To the credit of the children of this unfortunate home they each gave promise of becoming wholesome, independent citizens. And this is a full realization of our expectations in the average individual.

In the potter's field in a city far away there is one grave unmarked, unkept, unfrequented. The very grass has refused to grow upon it, as though it were blighted with a curse. We cannot imagine the sterility of this particular spot of earth anything but accidental; the disintegrating clay of the culprit would have as much value as fertilizer and food for worms as the body of a saint, and that is the final lot of all of us so far as this earthly part of us is concerned. Our modern conception of insanity and crime and their relationship to the defective human machine, has changed completely the attitude of society toward the deceased criminal and the suicide. They are no longer buried at the cross-road nor otherwise marked for the scorn and derision of future generations. We can look with pity at the last resting place of our poor unfortunate Jim and think of him as one of God's creatures who was cast in a defective

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

mold, and manifested in his life and death the obliquity which resulted therefrom.

Of Samuel we need say nothing more than that he lives in the memory of all who knew him as one of the rarest, choicest personalities it has been their privilege to meet. The grassy mound which arches over his earthly remains has been wet with many a tear. The mother and helpless brothers and sisters have found friends in their hour of need, and the years have brought reconciliation for a condition that at one time seemed intolerable. When the gloom of death settles upon a household and the grave opens to receive one from the family circle, it seems to the rest of them that life has lost all interest and that they can never know happiness or satisfaction again. But Time is the magician who plays with human emotions and changes them at will. When he waves His wand over the bowed head, it lifts itself erect again and in the new adjustment finds peace and consolation and even satisfaction in the memory which 'was at one time so painful.

Of Joseph, the type of the pessimist, there is nothing more to be said.

When a man becomes seasoned in the thought that he is the antithesis of all other men and that society is in conspiracy against him, there is not

## RETROSPECTIVE

much probability that he will ever change his mind. Obliquity of character in youth is not absolutely hopeless, because the reasoning of maturity may change the viewpoint. But when a man whose hair is turning gray gives himself over to vice and iniquity, his case is pitiful because it is so hopeless.

In a great city far away, there is a beautiful brown stone mansion, surrounded by gardens and lawns and beds of flowers, all laid out with the skill of an artist. We can pardon its tenant if there is something of the suggestion of whim in the way he has tempered together rare exotics and evergreens and marble statues into a composite landscape, for genius claims the right to be whimsical if she pleases, and we must grant her poetic license which she adopts without asking questions.

Our Richard married a lady of rare quality from one of the old colonial families, and many happy children came to grace their home. His studio is the eddying center of the best element of the art fraternity of his locality, and a wealthy patronage has poured treasure into his coffers to his heart's content. We cannot imagine any element of perfect happiness which fate has failed to bestow upon him.

Standing at the meridian of life as he is, with all his fondest hopes perfectly realized, barring acci-

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

dents, we can predict years of happiness yet to come. His life is surely a vindication of the law of compensation,<sup>1</sup> which applies to all people, great and small.

We will recall David to the stand and allow him to finish our case with a thanksgiving soliloquy which explains itself. The indulgent reader who has had the patience to follow these narratives has long ago learned that their purpose is not to exploit personality, but to get at some of the real problems of life in a tangible form for the admonition of youth and for the consolation of all those who have known the struggle of life and fought its battles, sometimes in faith and sometimes in doubt and uncertainty. The aim has been to look at life from many different angles, to point out the admonition of its nobler phases, and to hold up in the lime light its weak and unprofitable moods.

Without cross question, then, or rebuttal we will let David have his final say and then submit our case to the jury in the hope that they will be indulgent and judge charitably the faults and the failings of an inexperienced advocate who appears in court for the first time.

"I am musing as I sit in the midst of the books which have accumulated around me through all the years since my childhood, after a thanksgiving din-

## RETROSPECTIVE

ner of ample proportions and appetizing quality, and relating to myself in a mental way the things for which I have to be thankful.

"I place, first, my friends. They are the greatest asset to any life. Without them the other things in the world would not be worth having. The friend who can look with charity on our faults, and bear with patience our untoward moods; who can weep with us when we weep, and exult with us in our hours of victory, is one of the greatest gifts of God. And we should be thankful for all such who have come by chance or choice into our circle.

"As I ply the well worn keys of this writing machine, I am pestered with busy little hands which are anxious with the first opportunity to mar my orthography with misplaced letters or my syntax with words foreign to the text in which they appear. I see little blue eyes, bubbling over with mischief, and beaming with interest, and as I bear with patience the pranks they are wont to play on me I say, 'Thank God for these little sparks of the Divine fire which have come to illuminate my home!'

"On the sofa by my side as I write is the one who has been with me through all the process of the development of this aggregation of material things and human fixtures in various degrees of growth which

## AFTER TWENTY YEARS

go to make up a home, who has kept the heterogeneous mixture in precise adjustment and all the bearings lubricated, and who has withal shed over it all an influence of kindness and unselfish devotion, and intelligent adaptation of means to ends, and I say, 'Thank God for her!'

"I look over the varied stock of books which are upon the shelves before me, some fresh from the shop of the printer, and some begrimed with finger marks of childish hands, and spotted with tear-stains of early emotions which came to me away back in the morning of my life. And I say 'Thank God for these mute companions of my earliest years and of my days of maturity. From them I have received such thrills as only they can comprehend who have lived in the atmosphere of literature.

"I recall the days of trial and the hours of temptation which have beset my pathway, and think of the distress that one step to the right or to the left in critical moments might have brought into my life, and I thank God that I have been spared the humiliation of capitulating to weakness or to sin.

"Success has not been without effort. The world is not built upon the plan of something for nothing. But I thank God for that original impulse which made the effort possible.

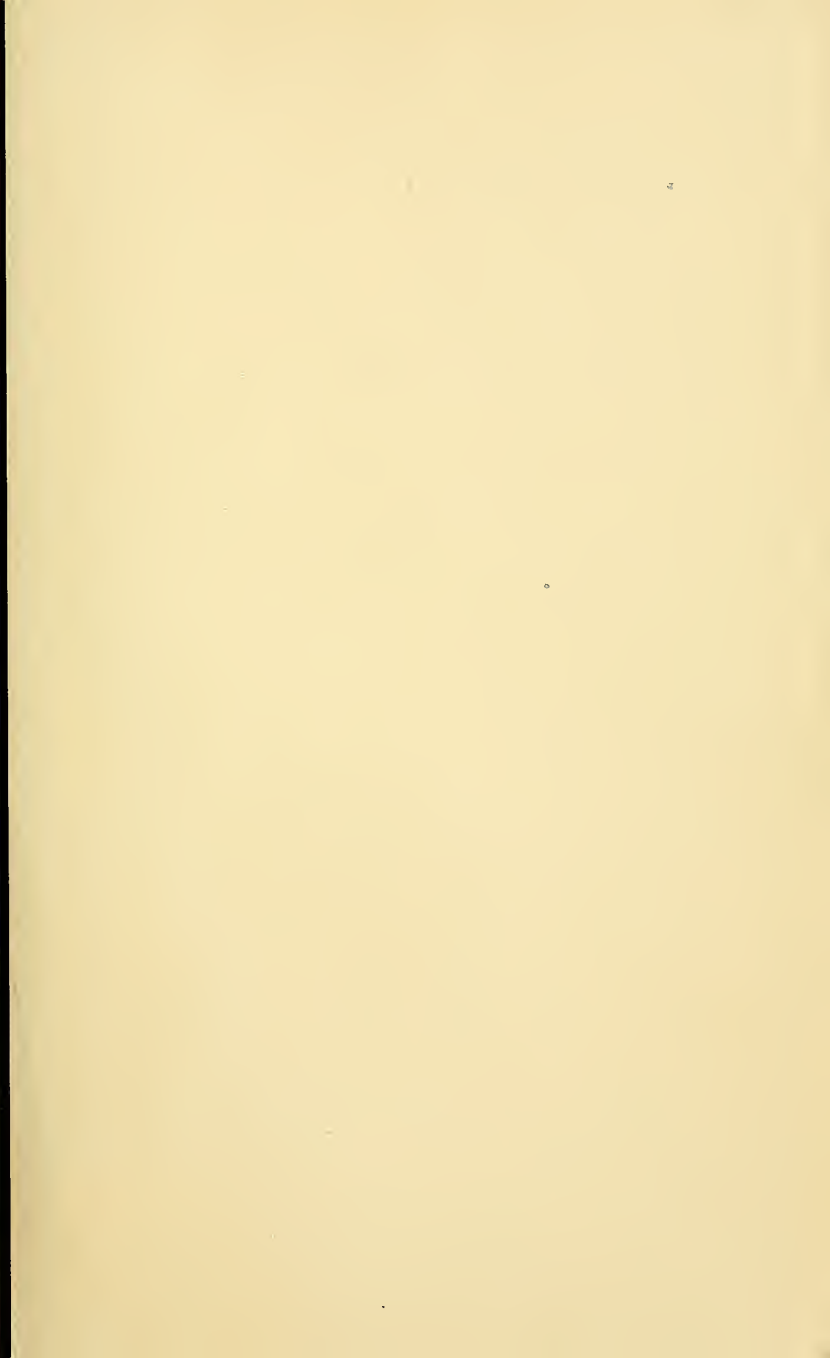


## RETROSPECTIVE

"I look out of my window and see white fleecy clouds projecting themselves against a background of beautiful blue, and I am stirred with the message they bring to my soul from over the abyss—of the aesthetic method of the great Artisan who made heaven and earth on plans of symmetry and form and color. I see the empty garden beds where beautiful flowers were wont to display their gorgeous colors in the summer sun, and I am thrilled with memories that come to me from all the years which have known the delight of summer flowers. I thank God not only for the beautiful things of the world but for that measure of aesthetic taste which enables me to receive and appropriate their Divine message.

"And so I am satisfied with life, and happy on this thanksgiving day that I have such a catalogue of things to be thankful for."





Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Sept. 2004

## **PreservationTechnologies**

**A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION**

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 190 504 A

